

Common Ground

The Mexican American: A National Concern

THE WETBACK TIDE Hart Stilwell

CALIFORNIA AND THE WETBACK

Carey McWilliams

THE NEW MEXICO PATTERN R. L. Chambers

PROGRAM FOR ACTION Ernesto Galarza

THE CHALLENGE OF CITIZENSHIP Dan W. Dodson

THEY BELONGED Thomas Sancton

PINCE-NEZ AND CALICO Mikhail Jeleznov

THE GOLDEN MYTH D'Arcy McNickle

AS LONG AS THE GRASS SHALL GROW

Carlos Bulosan

— *and others* —

50c.

SUMMER 1949



Minority group relations
in the United States

AMERICA DIVIDED

*by Arnold and
Caroline Rose*

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

A challenging survey of racial, religious, and national minorities; their political, economic, and social position in American life today, the hatreds that divide them, the discriminations they suffer.

- "Thorough, conscientious, and constructive . . . packed with significant facts and figures . . . infused with an admirable spirit . . . a wide reading of it and a sincere acceptance of its central message would help to make a better world."

—HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD,
Saturday Review of Literature.

- "A timely guide to enlightenment . . . distilled into easily understood prose . . . the reader emerges a more thoughtful person who is perhaps willing to take some action."

—*Philadelphia Inquirer*

\$4.00 wherever books are sold

ALFRED • A • KNOPE, *Publisher*

JUST OUT!

A New Edition of the Council's
Well-Known

How to Become a Citizen of the United States

BY MARIAN SCHIBSBY
AND READ LEWIS

Tells the newcomer who wishes to become an American citizen what he must do. Includes 131 specimen questions and answers for applicants.

Thousands have prepared for naturalization hearings over the past quarter of a century with earlier editions of this simple and usable text.

96 pages 50¢

Also Recently Published

The Admission and Resettlement of Displaced Persons in the United States

BY FRANK L. AUERBACH

Brings together in convenient form the most important legal and technical information needed by local social and civic agencies and others concerned with displaced persons.

40 pp. mimeographed 75¢

COMMON COUNCIL FOR
AMERICAN UNITY

20 W. 40 Street New York 18

CONTENTS

TITLE	AUTHOR	PAGE
THE MEXICAN AMERICAN: A NATIONAL CONCERN		
THE WETBACK TIDE	Hart Stilwell	3
CALIFORNIA AND THE WETBACK	Carey McWilliams	15
THE NEW MEXICO PATTERN	R. L. Chambers	20
PROGRAM FOR ACTION	Ernesto Galarza	28
AS LONG AS THE GRASS SHALL GROW	Carlos Bulosan	38
THE CENTURY OF THE DISCOMMONED MAN	Paul Meadows	44
PINCE-NEZ AND CALICO	Mikhail Jeleznov	47
MEN OF OIL	Photographs	53
THE CHALLENGE OF CITIZENSHIP	Dan W. Dodson	61
THE GOLDEN MYTH	D'Arcy McNickle	65
THEY BELONGED	Thomas Sancton	75
ADOBE FOURTH DIMENSION	Dorothy Pillsbury	79
EUROPEAN BELIEFS REGARDING THE UNITED STATES	A Study	84

DEPARTMENTS

Common Council at Work, 84

Round-Up, conducted by Carey McWilliams, 90

The Pursuit of Liberty, conducted by Milton R. Konvitz, 96

The Bookshelf, 102

COMMON GROUND. Published quarterly by Common Council for American Unity. \$2.00 a year; 50 cents a copy. Copyright 1949, by Common Council for American Unity, Incorporated. Printed at the Princeton University Press. Editorial and publication office, 20 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York. Manuscripts must be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes. Entered as second-class matter September 15, 1940, at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

COMMON GROUND is published by the COMMON COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN UNITY,
Willkie Memorial Building, 20 West 40th Street, New York 18, N.Y.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EARL G. HARRISON

Chairman

SIGURD J. ARNESEN

MALCOLM W. DAVIS

JOSEPHINE ROCHE

DONALD YOUNG

Vice-Chairmen

SYLVAN GOTSHAL

Treasurer

ALLEN T. BURNS

MRS. THOMAS CAPEK

ELIZABETH EASTMAN

EDWARD J. ENNIS

ARNOLD HARTLEY

JAMES L. HOUGHTELING

NICHOLAS KALASHNIKOFF

ROBERT D. KOHN

READ LEWIS

MRS. ROBERT L. POPPER

MRS. JACOB A. RIIS

HARRY STARR

EUGENE H. ZAGAT

ADVISORY EDITORIAL BOARD

VAN WYCK BROOKS

PEARL BUCK

MARY ELLEN CHASE

LANGSTON HUGHES

ALVIN JOHNSON

THOMAS MANN

LIN YUTANG

M. MARGARET ANDERSON

Editor

READ LEWIS, *Executive Director*

The COMMON COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN UNITY has the following purposes:

To help create among the American people the unity and mutual understanding resulting from a common citizenship, a common belief in democracy and the ideals of liberty, the placing of the common good before the interests of any group, and the acceptance, in fact as well as in law, of all citizens, whatever their national or racial origins, as equal partners in American life.

To further an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people.

To overcome intolerance and discrimination because of national origin, race, or creed.

To help the foreign-born and their children solve their special problems of adjustment, know and value their particular cultural heritage, and share fully and constructively in American life.

The work of the Council is supported by memberships and contributions: Subscribing Membership, \$3; Participating, \$5; Co-operating, \$10; Contributing, \$25; Supporting, \$50; Sustaining, \$100 and over. All memberships include subscription to COMMON GROUND. Subscription to COMMON GROUND alone is \$2.



THE MEXICAN AMERICAN: A NATIONAL CONCERN

THE WETBACK TIDE

HART STILWELL

EARLY in October, 1948, thousands of Mexicans from as far south as the state of Michoacan began assembling at Juarez, across the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas. They were on their way to work in cotton fields, beet fields, and other fields in southwestern and western states. They had come in response to reports of wages in the United States which were, in terms of pesos, far above anything these people could make in their homeland.

At the border, this small current in a dark tide moving steadily northward came to a halt. Difficulties developed between Mexican officials in Juarez and American officials in El Paso. Mexican officials contended that the workers should receive \$3 a hundred pounds for the first picking of cotton, and more for subsequent pickings. American officials contended that the agreement between the two nations under which laborers were being moved back and forth provided that the prevailing wage in an area should be paid. This wage, they said, was \$2 a hundred.

The Mexican laborers were in no position to wait. They were without funds, some of them hungry, few of them with a place in which to sleep under a roof. They began crossing the river, permit or no

permit. In a period of a few days, four thousand were rounded up and returned to the Mexican side of the river, during which time no progress was made in discussions between the Mexican and American officials.

Then Grover C. Willmoth, district immigration director at El Paso, told his inspectors to let the bars down. The Mexicans began streaming across. If there was any effort on the part of Mexican officials to stop them, it was not effective. And the Americans claimed that Mexican soldiers actually helped the laborers across the international border.

As the immigrants crossed, they were placed under technical arrest by U.S. immigration officials and were then paroled to the United States Employment Service. The Employment Service rationed them out to waiting employers and labor agents, and soon the Mexicans were crowded into trucks and on their way to the cotton and beet fields.

Director Willmoth of the Immigration Service contended that Mexican officials had broken the agreement with the United States in demanding \$3 a hundred for cotton picking before permitting the laborers to cross. Don Lorin of Washington, chief of the farm placement division of the U.S. Employment Service,

was more outspoken. On the scene in El Paso he said, "These Mexican officials [in Juarez] were pointing a pistol at the American farmer's head. It was an outright breach of the labor agreement."

These are strange words to be coming from a high U.S. official. However, they are consistent with the general attitude of the American employer group, which Mr. Lorin represents, toward the Mexican, particularly the Mexican immigrant laborer.

The Mexicans crossed. Mexico broke off the labor agreement. Other Mexicans continued to cross, at El Paso and elsewhere along the border, legally or illegally. They continued to cross as they have been doing since the early days of the last war. In recent months officials of the two nations have conducted a prolonged series of conferences seeking to work out a new agreement. Mexico wants an agreement on the theory that she can then make it possible for her people to enter the United States legally, thus, theoretically, giving them a slightly improved economic status. This nation wants an agreement in order to increase the tide of low-priced labor.

At this writing, negotiations have come to a standstill as a result of disagreement on two points: first, Mexico wants the laborers recruited at their place of residence, while the United States wants to recruit them at the border; and, second, Mexico wants to retain the right to blacklist areas or states in which there is discrimination, while the United States wants this right.

Mexico's desire to have recruiting done at the home of the laborer is quite natural. It would tend to avoid such scenes as those at Juarez and El Paso. There would be no such unorganized, chaotic movements toward the border in response to vague promises. As for the business of banning Mexican immigrants in areas

where there is discrimination, Mexico's position is easily understood. Presumably the Employment Service would be the United States' agency to determine the areas in which discrimination existed. The spectacle of Mr. Lorin looking for discrimination against Mexicans might appear humorous to some people; it wouldn't appear that way to the Mexicans.

The entire story of what happened at El Paso has not been told. It will never be told, since the ten thousand who crossed the Rio Grande are scattered over a tremendous area, and it is their story that is important. A few of them were interviewed. They said they had been led to believe they would receive \$3 or more a hundred pounds for picking cotton.

In fact, Mexico City newspapers and other newspapers in that Republic frequently complain of the lavish promises spread throughout Mexico by American employers and labor agents in order to create the migrations to the border.

Getting down to the basic disagreement, what is a basic wage in an area, particularly one in which a crop is just maturing? How is the wage set? Without any doubt in the world, the wage in the areas toward which those immigrant laborers were headed was set by that very factor—availability of a large, expendable surplus of labor. The immigration officials at El Paso, in fact, admitted this when they issued a statement, printed in El Paso newspapers at that time, warning employers that if they "continued" to take advantage of the situation and pay only \$1.50 a hundred, then the immigration inspectors would be ordered to round up the laborers and ship them back to Mexico. It is significant that in those parts of the South where there was no large supply of immigrant labor available, the wage was higher, \$3 or even more. A "prevailing" wage can be whatever a group of em-

THE WETBACK TIDE

ployers, viewing the available labor supply, decide to make it. Mexicans have finally learned that.

What happened at El Paso is only a small part of what is happening along the entire United States-Mexico border from Brownsville to San Diego. The El Paso incident was significant only insofar as it put U.S. immigration officials definitely on record in the attitude of the Service, and official Washington, toward enforcement of the immigration laws. It revealed what has been generally known along the border since 1943—that the United States is not making any effort to check the tide of wetbacks.

II

Wetback is a term used in Texas to designate illegally entered Mexicans. Nobody knows how many wetbacks there are in Texas today. Estimates range from 100,000 to 400,000. Since Mexico has for years refused to permit legal entry of her nationals into Texas, on the grounds that there is racial and economic discrimination against them, it is almost impossible for a Mexican to enter the state legally.

Wetbacks enter by wading or swimming the Rio Grande (hence the term), and are subject to deportation. During those days when this nation did not want more laborers, these illegally entered Mexicans were hunted down with great diligence, arrested, placed in jail, then deported—sometimes without a trial, sometimes after a trial in federal court. Second offenders were given jail sentences. Third offenders were sent to federal prison for a year and a day. In those days it was a crime to enter the United States illegally. It still is a crime for some people—D.P.'s from Europe, stowaways, etc.—to enter this nation illegally. According to the statutes it is a crime for a Mexican laborer to enter illegally. Actually, it is not.

The wetback is welcomed. He is not molested unless he commits a crime of some other kind, or unless a formal complaint is made against him by someone, usually another Mexican, one who is legally entered and who resents these newcomers who are rooting him out of his job. If a formal complaint is made, the Immigration Service goes through the formality of deportation proceedings, usually following a line called "voluntary" deportation. Otherwise the wetback is not molested.

It should be pointed out here that seldom in the history of a nation has so vast an army of people been so little wanted by the population of the nation into which the laborers are moving. The only two groups who want the wetbacks in this nation are the men who employ them and the state and federal officials who represent the employer group. Nobody else in Texas wants the wetbacks. In fact, almost all other people are strongly, and in some cases violently, opposed to their entry. In other words, out of the 7,000,000 people in Texas, it is quite likely that 6,950,000 are strongly opposed to this steady stream of people from the south.

Still they come.

The number of people of Spanish-Mexican extraction in the United States is not definitely known, nor will it be definitely known even after the 1950 census is completed. Best estimate for the number in the border states and states adjacent thereto is between 2,500,000 and 3,000,000. Of this number, about half are in Texas. That is, Texas has somewhere near 1,400,000 people of Spanish-Mexican extraction, the "Spanish" part being so small as to be a negligible factor. It is significant that approximately a million of these people have entered Texas since 1900. People think of Texas as a place that has always had a large Texas-

Mexican population, but, relatively speaking, it hasn't in the past.

The present flood of immigrants, starting in 1942 and 1943, has been steadily pushing the Texas-Mexican population northward in the state, and on to other states. Even some of the wetbacks who came several years ago, and who have learned to feel their way around, have been moving northward. Newly arrived wetbacks replace them just as they replaced the resident Texas-Mexicans, those legally entered.

Not all of this northward movement has been due to new immigration. Part of it was a by-product of the war; that early movement north helped create the demand for more cheap labor. During the manpower shortage of the war days, many Mexicans were admitted to industries from which they had been barred in the past, and this took them away from the farms and filling stations and ranches of Southwest Texas. Others who went to war refused to work again for the low wages paid in the border area, and moved north.

In some parts of Texas, particularly in the rich Lower Rio Grande Valley at the very southern tip of the state, wetbacks make up almost all the unskilled labor and a part of the skilled. The resident Texas-Mexicans, even in some of the skilled trades, simply could not withstand the economic competition of this army of hungry men willing to work at any wage.

During the past six years the results of this northward movement are noticeable in many parts of Texas, in such cities as Houston, Dallas, Austin, and Fort Worth. In those areas it is the Negro who is beginning to feel the economic pressure. Mexicans are taking his job. In restaurants, hotels, laundries, at road work, janitor work, truck driving, on countless other jobs, the Mexican is making his ap-

pearance throughout Texas, replacing the Negro.

And still the tide moves northward.

Where all this will stop is a question that will probably be settled on the basis of demand, certainly not of supply. Recent estimates place the population of Mexico at 24,000,000, an increase of one hundred per cent since 1900. Mexico is not able to feed her people. So much of the land in the nation runs at varying sharp angles to the horizontal that the earth's surface which can be tilled is restricted to such an extent that it will not feed such a population. There seems little prospect of any check in the population increase, since ignorance and the Catholic church combine to check any efforts at birth control. Only a highly developed industrial economy could make it possible for Mexico to feed her people in what would be considered a healthful, desirable manner. And Mexico's industry is in its infancy.

There is, then, a tremendous population pressure—and the pressure is northward, since the situation to the south is much the same as that in Mexico. An almost limitless supply of manpower, willing to work at any wage offered, is pushing against this nation's southern border. The current wage in the areas immediately adjacent to that border is from \$2 to \$3 a day, seldom more. It increases gradually as one moves northward. But there is this additional significant fact about the northward movement of the Mexican: as he moves, he depresses the wage scale. The wetback holds the wage along the border down to \$2.50 a day or less. The men he replaces hold down the wage level throughout Texas. These helpless, hungry little brown men are having a much greater effect than most people think.

There are people, particularly those who employ these Mexican immigrants, who contend that the wetback is for-

THE WETBACK TIDE

fortunate in being able to come to Texas and get work, even though he is paid no more than \$2 or \$2.50 a day. These people point to the much lower wage in Mexico and to poverty and hunger throughout that nation. The argument involves comparative evaluations of cultures so divergent that any number of positions could be defended to the satisfaction of those supporting them.

On one point there can be no doubt: we, as a people, are responsible for the conditions under which all of us, immigrant wetback or resident native, live. And there exists in the extreme southern part of this nation a tremendous foreign population living under conditions which simply cannot be reconciled with any American concept of the barest minimum of a decent standard of living. There is this further point on which there can be no valid refutation: there are developing in this same area complex social, political, and economic problems that will be with us when future generations are carrying on in our place.

We have deliberately brought about this situation.

Conditions under which a large percentage of the wetbacks in Texas live would seem incredible to most Americans. In the first place, the wetback is here illegally and he is frightened. He is afraid he will be deported; then his condition will be infinitely worse, since he probably sold everything he possessed, including his donkey and serape, to get enough money to come to the border.

Being afraid of his fellow man, both American and Mexican (it is the Mexican resident, fighting for his livelihood, who tries to get the wetback sent back to Mexico), the immigrant virtually lives in hiding. He may live in some little hut, or in a corner of a barn, or under some trees. If the wetback decides to stay in this country, he sends for his family as

soon as he can. They come, illegally, and move into the hut or the corner of the barn with him. Then relatives come and join the little group, always seeking out some human contact in this strange land. They too move in. Then they bring their families. Sometimes fifteen or twenty people are living in one small house—a house that would be considered unfit for even a small family.

If the wetback is ill, he seldom makes any effort to get a doctor. The doctor—assuming one could be induced to call on a wetback—might report him to the officers and the wetback might be deported. Occasionally an employer, interested in the wetback's labor, gives him some medicine, or maybe calls a doctor if the man appears to be in a bad way. The percentage of employers interested in the children of the wetback to the extent of securing medical aid for them in time of illness is probably not overwhelming. I do not know why it should be that way, but it is a fact that the business of being an employer often hardens one toward the misfortunes of those whom he employs. Perhaps it is inevitable.

Since he has no legal status, the wetback has no rights. If he is not paid, or if he is short-changed, he makes no complaint. To whom would he complain? The chances are he can't even count American money with any degree of accuracy. And in those cases where he is given some beans and coffee and corn by the employer, and perhaps a little medicine, he is utterly incapable of knowing what is due him over and above the charge for these items. He is the ideal victim for those desiring to victimize him—there are plenty of them.

The lot of the wetbacks who work under contract—and these make up the great armies of migratory labor that move from the Rio Grande northward through the cotton and beet fields—is perhaps a

little better. At such work there is a greater measure of security because the Mexican works under a labor contractor or boss, and this boss speaks Spanish. Furthermore, there is a certain element of security in numbers. In any large group there are always some who know what is going on, and who can help protect the rights of all, even against a chiseling labor boss.

As these armies of migrant Mexicans started moving westward and northward, their presence in many towns where there had been no Mexicans in the past was bitterly resented, and many tragic scenes ensued. The Mexicans were barred from the use of rest rooms, from stores, from moving picture houses—they were barred every place. The bitterness increased when waves of dysentery swept some of these towns when the Mexicans moved in. An astonishingly large number of Mexicans carry some of the various dysentery germs in their systems.

The most obvious evils of this situation were met, after a fashion, by labor centers, or camps, which were set up along the path of the migrant workers, largely with federal funds. The centers were administered by the Extension Service of Texas A. & M. College. Some genuine progress in human relationship was made in this work, the A. & M. men showing themselves to be enterprising, able, and sympathetic. But the federal funds have been cut off. Some of the camps—there were 63 at the peak—have been taken over by counties, some by cities, some by private individuals, some abandoned. Still the army of migrant laborers, largely wetback, moves on.

The wetback follows the crop across Texas, from south to north. Then he may even move on into another state. Then, with his carefully hoarded savings—maybe forty dollars, maybe even sixty or eighty—he may start back to his home-

land. And the climax of a situation that is basically tragic at its best comes all too often when this wetback crosses the Rio Grande with his money. For along the south bank of the river a pack of human wolves has assembled to prey on these unfortunates.

Bodies float down the Rio Grande at frequent intervals—always “unidentified” bodies. Far down in Mexico a family waits with that quiet patience the Mexican Indian learned centuries ago. Few others give the incident a second thought. There’s another wetback where he came from.

III

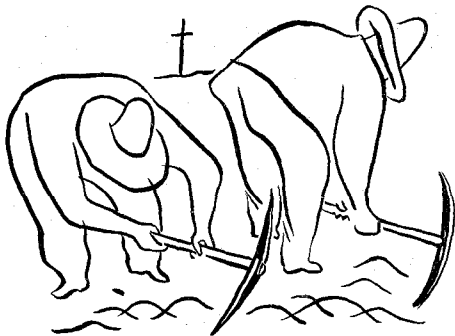
The story of the relationship between the Spanish-Mexican and the Anglo-Texan is one that still remains to be told in terms worthy of its graphic human drama. A pattern for the relationship was set in Mexico as far back as the first half of the 16th century, when the Spaniards made slaves of the Mexican Indians. In Texas today those Spaniards who have been able to establish themselves definitely in the minds of the Anglo-Texans as former Europeans, not former Mexicans, have been accorded an equality of a sort. The position of the Mexican in relation to the European has always been that of an inferior. It is that today.

The Mexican has been the cowhand, the cotton picker, the farm laborer, the janitor, the railway section hand, the shine boy, the waiter, the filling-station attendant. He has been the person to whom you could shout, “What’s wrong with you, you Mexican bastard?” without fear of consequences. He has been the person the Anglo-Texan could kill, even on the slightest whim, with full knowledge that nothing serious to the Anglo-Texan would follow. He has received about half the pay the Anglo-Texan has received for the same work. That condition has changed some, but not much.

THE WETBACK TIDE

Possibility of improvement in the overall picture has been bright at times, but with each improvement there has come the apparently inevitable wave of new immigration, and the cycle has been repeated. For instance, by 1908 the Texas-Mexican population in Texas had reached the point where the people at least had that small degree of security that goes with a condition of peonage on landed estates. The Texas-Mexican considered that he belonged to the patron, but in return he knew that the patron had certain obligations, extending to the care and feeding of the illegitimate children he had by the daughters of the Mexicans.

Then began the development of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, coming at a time when Mexico was ready to launch into a series of violent revolutions lasting for two decades. Mexicans started streaming across the border. They cleared the



land and planted the crops in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Even at that early date they rooted out some of the native population, which started northward. From that day to this, the Lower Rio Grande Valley has acted as a sort of funnel through which have come successive waves of immigrants.

By 1929 the wave of immigration had reached its peak.

Then, during the depression years, when this nation no longer needed the Mexicans, the tide was turned the other

way—by force. An estimated 350,000 Mexicans were deported or voluntarily returned to their homeland. Some of the scenes were heart-rending to people who believe that someone with a different skin color is capable of suffering. Families were torn apart—parents taken away from children, husbands and wives separated.

In the ten years that followed, the condition of those Mexicans who remained improved. During the years immediately preceding the war and during the war, the rate of improvement was accelerated. In fact, a new day appeared to be dawning for the Texas-Mexicans. Thousands grabbed at a chance for a better life, economically and socially, by entering the armed services. There was violent complaint among the Anglo-Texans about the allotments to the wives of Mexican veterans “ruining” them—they even bought silk or nylon stockings! And there was no question but that many of these people tossed off their money in what they considered the best means of conspicuous display. Efforts to convince the Anglo-Texans, who bought Cadillacs, that it wasn’t actually criminal for a Mexican girl to buy a silk dress were of no avail. Still, efforts of the Anglo-Texans to check the steadily improving condition of the Mexicans were equally unavailing.

Mexicans were admitted to kinds of work that had been closed to them. Even along the border the darker of Mexican girls had never before been given a chance to work as waitresses in a restaurant serving Anglo-Texans, but now dark faces showed up in unexpected places, not only along the border but throughout Texas. Mexican children began going to school. Mexicans were admitted into labor unions, from most of which they had previously been barred. When Texas-Mexicans in the uniform of the armed services were barred from restaurants,

COMMON GROUND

barber shops, and other such places, scenes were created. The Texas-Mexican began doing what any people any place in the world must do if it is ever to achieve and maintain equality—he began demanding equality. And he began getting it. Public sentiment turned toward the Texas-Mexican in many cases, particularly those involving men in the armed services. Many of the “No Mexicans Allowed” signs were removed. In general, it looked as though the new day was here.

But the Mexican reckoned without the men who hire him. Employers along the border, and particularly in the tremendously rich Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, set out to force a change in immigration regulations so that Mexican laborers could cross. The Cardenas regime was over in Mexico, and the boom prosperity that was making a few people in that country rich was squeezing the peasant and laborer through the medium of inflation. He was ready to move out.

The employer group put on the heat. They had the staunch backing of their congressmen and senators. They notified Washington that unless they could have cheap labor to harvest their crops, the Valley would withdraw and let the nation lose the war. While most of the rest of the United States was struggling along harvesting its crops and getting the job done generally without importing cheap labor from some foreign land, the Valley convinced officials in Washington that it could not survive without such labor. It did this in spite of repeated reports of the U.S. Employment Service bureaus in the area to the effect that labor was available, if it was only used intelligently. What these Valley employers wanted was what the employer always wants—an expendable surplus of labor. They wanted to be able to set a “prevailing wage,” not have it set for them by labor.

The employer group won.

Word went down the line to immigration patrolmen that they were to ignore wetbacks actually at work on farms. They were to pick up only those they encountered on highways, or those who were formally reported to them. It was the opening wedge. From the tiny trickle of wetbacks that started in then has come the great flood of today.

Mexico tried to check the flow, at least insofar as Texas was concerned. Texas was placed on the blacklist for contract labor from Mexico because of discrimination in Texas against Mexicans. In order to have this ban removed, the governor of Texas, then Coke Stevenson, formed what he called the Good Neighbor Commission. Long before the Commission became active, great strides toward bringing about better understanding between the two groups in Texas had been made by the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, which had set up an office in Texas. Once more it was federal funds which started a trend.

When the federal funds were no longer available, the Good Neighbor Commission carried on. Its able secretary, Mrs. Pauline Kibbe, held to the same policies set in the days when she worked for the Co-ordinator's office. But the war was over, and the wetbacks were coming, agreement or no agreement, and tempers had changed. Mrs. Kibbe spent too much time concerning herself with the business of wages, members of the Commission (one a large employer of wetback labor) thought. When she appeared at a hearing between Mexican and American officials at which a labor agreement of a sort was finally reached, and vigorously worked for a wage minimum of 37½ cents an hour instead of 25 cents (as favored by the wetback-labor employer member of the Commission), it was obvious that her days on the job were numbered.

The present secretary of the Commis-

THE WETBACK TIDE

sion, Thomas Sutherland, is a sincere, hard-working young man. He has done some fine work in going to areas where there are "incidents" and bringing about harmony. With the limited funds available, he carries on creditably. But there is no secret about the fact that the Commission now exists primarily as an agency for handling relations between the two nations on a much higher level—social interchanges, visiting dignitaries, etc., etc. The old urges and drives and objectives which made the office of the Co-ordinator group enthusiastic about their work have been officially abandoned.

Many of the gains made by Texas-Mexicans during the war have been lost as a result of the recent influx of wetbacks. And these people have brought new



problems, some of which are of a baffling nature. If an equal number of fair-skinned, English-speaking people—say around 300,000—living in a culture equivalent to that of the Mexican immigrant in his homeland were suddenly dumped into Texas, the social and economic and political upheaval would not

be solved for years. Add to that the two additional complications of language and color difference, and you have a situation that appears almost hopeless. In fact, there is little prospect that the Mexican in Texas will ever achieve anything approximating economic and social equality until conditions in Mexico change for the better. For it may be accepted as a definite fact that so long as low-priced Mexican labor is desired in this nation, legal barriers will not constitute a bar. And so long as the Mexicans who come here are people from a culture relatively untouched by the industrial era, then so long will the present condition in Texas endure.

IV

The problems presented to those sincerely interested in helping these people are tremendous. In the first place, most of the wetbacks are illiterate. In the second place, they are from a land where they have few rights. In Mexico they accept the inferior role in the presence of the rich, the official group, and the army group. Hence they are likely to accept exploitation and denial of simple rights as merely a part of life any place. Then, most of them are entirely unfamiliar with almost every aspect of our highly mechanized, so-called material culture. They do not understand the workings of a toilet, and endless irritation results from this. Their idea of sanitation is entirely different from ours in every way. So is their idea of health—they are likely to be frightened by doctors, to keep sickness and disease secret to avoid contacts with doctors.

Working and living as they do, they cannot bathe (an old Mexican-Indian custom which the Conquistadores and the early-day padres stopped), and the complaint of restaurant operators and other owners of businesses that they have a

COMMON GROUND

strong, unpleasant body odor is often true. An Anglo-Texan might have an even more objectionable odor under similar circumstances.

The list of things which cause irritation between the two groups is almost endless.

Then these newcomers are quite dark in color—darker in most cases than the Texas-Mexican already on hand, for the latter has a more generous mixture of European inheritance. Some of the wetbacks are as dark as many Negroes. Some are part Negro. In Mexico there is no ban on marriages between Negroes and members of other race groups.

The Texan, indoctrinated since childhood with a burning determination to “keep the Negro in his place,” is inclined to lump the Mexican Indian with the Negro. This intensifies his race prejudice. The Negro, on the other hand, resents the Mexican because the latter will work for less. The Mexican, looking for someone lower than himself, is delighted to find a still more downtrodden people, at least legally. So he snubs the Negro.

All is confusion.

In many ways the presence of the wetback presents a problem as serious as that handed the white people of the South when the Negro was freed from slavery. Here are a people who are theoretically free, yet they are definitely not so, and in the opinion of the Anglo-Texan they are incapable of existing as free people.

V

So little has been done, and so much of that negated by recent waves of immigration, that one viewing the picture with a clear eye is inclined to feel slightly ashamed at pointing to what might be termed improvements. Yet there have been some.

For one thing, segregation in the public schools of Texas is, at last, being broken

down. And again it was a federal agency, a United States District Court, that paved the way. In a decision rendered in June, 1948, Federal Judge B. H. Rice held that segregation of Texas-Mexicans was in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the federal Constitution (apparently segregation of Negroes isn't), and ordered it ended. Dr. L. A. Woods, state superintendent of public instruction, has been putting the verdict into effect. As I write this, a hearing is in progress, one involving segregation at a border town. In the past, many dodges were used to get around the charge of open segregation in schools. They're not working now. The Mexican children can be kept in separate rooms (but on the same campus and in the same buildings) for the first year. That's all. That one year of segregation is permitted because of language differences.

This is a tremendous forward stride, and it is astonishing to note that in some areas the children of wetbacks are flocking to school, creating dismay on the part of school officials. For, like the wetback laborer, these children just don't exist officially. Still, there they are, in school.

These are encouraging aspects of the situation.

There are many others. Some educators have taken the lead in fighting for the rights of these people. Some churches are at last realizing that if they are to be worthy of continued existence, part of their obligation lies in the field of promoting brotherly love between all peoples, not the fair-skinned alone.

One of the most promising recent developments is the political emergence of the Texas-Mexican as an independent group. For a century the Mexican vote has been herded to the polls and cast in blocks by Anglo-Texan political bosses. That's still done in some South Texas counties—the present junior senator from

Texas, Lyndon Johnson, owes his seat to just such block voting, although in fairness it must be mentioned that his opponent, Coke Stevenson, was himself the beneficiary of that same vote in some previous elections. Now the Texas-Mexicans are developing leadership of their own, and as they do so, they are becoming the balance of power in many cities and may become a sort of balance wheel in state politics. They are rapidly moving into a position where they can bargain for their rights. Leadership among the group is developing. Gus Garcia, bright young San Antonio lawyer, who has represented the Texas-Mexican in many court cases, is an example. He is making the Texas-Mexican an independent, and very powerful, political factor in San Antonio. Some Anglo-Texans are becoming alarmed, fearing eventual control of a large part of South Texas by Texas-Mexicans. It's possible. Already in some border cities, such as Brownsville and Laredo, the Anglo-Texans have agreed to joint control in order to avoid complete rout.

There are still other encouraging aspects of the situation.

Many long-time resident Mexicans have been admitted into labor unions and are receiving more pay. They live under better conditions and are educating their children. These young people will furnish the type leadership the Texas-Mexican has not had in the past. For in the past only the Spanish-Texan was educated, and he never considered himself a part of the Mexican group. Far too often he was more keenly interested than the Anglo-Texan in keeping the Mexican downtrodden, for in doing so he made clear his own superior status. Now Mexicans are being admitted into colleges where they were discouraged, if not actually barred, in the past.

Official Texas—those who govern the state, whether at the capitol or at its

economic and financial centers—is still determined to maintain a white supremacy that excludes the Texas-Mexican, and particularly the wetback. But the reaction of Texas people by and large appears to be changing for the better. An illustration of this was furnished recently by the Felix Longoria case. Felix Longoria lived at Three Rivers, a small town near San Antonio. He was killed on the island of Luzon. Not long ago his body was brought back for reburial. The story of exactly what happened is slightly confused from there on, but on one point there seems to be no doubt: the widow of Felix Longoria definitely believed that the operator of the only undertaking establishment in Three Rivers did not want to have services for the dead soldier conducted in his chapel. After a bitter squabble, between the dead man's parents and his widow, as well as between people in all walks of life throughout Texas, the body of Felix Longoria was finally laid to rest at the Arlington Cemetery in Washington.

The significant thing here is not that the owner of an undertaking establishment did not want to conduct services for Felix Longoria, a Texas-Mexican. That merely follows a pattern. What is significant is that sentiment throughout the state was overwhelmingly against such a stand. Of course, this sentiment stemmed largely from the fact that Longoria was a war victim—a soldier killed while fighting for his country. But if the sentiment is genuine, one need not probe unnecessarily into its causes.

The Mexican who is in Texas today, and particularly the Mexican who has been here a long time and whose residence is legal, has a slightly better life than did the Mexican in Texas twenty years ago, just as the life of the Negro in Texas today is much brighter than it was twenty years ago. Whatever one may say

COMMON GROUND

to the contrary, race prejudice is on the decrease. But this Texas-Mexican has a long way to go before he can achieve anything approximating total equality.

As for the newcomers, that vast army of wetbacks, theirs is a heavy burden. Only an anthropologist, hardened to gazing upon the human scene with a time-space objectivity, or the man who employs wetbacks, can contemplate this dark tide without emotional reaction. For the present, there seems little hope for them.

With this article by Hart Stilwell, COMMON GROUND introduces a series of pieces analyzing the most immediate problems of Mexican Americans and outlining possible programs of action to deal with them. As Ernesto Galarza points out in his article on page 27, "The conditions of life and work of the Spanish-speaking minority in the United States are no longer a problem only of the borderlands"; their repercussions are inescapably national in scope. Yet here is a group about which too few persons outside the Southwest are informed and concerned, a group which so far has no national organization working to protect its rights. The very real progress made during the war years in giving Mexican Americans greater equality of opportunity with Americans of other backgrounds—through FEPC,

the manpower shortage, the Army—is currently being badly undercut by the "wetback" situation, which, by a process of economic chain reaction, is undermining the whole farm labor situation north from the Southwest. In this and succeeding issues, COMMON GROUND will spotlight this sore spot in American democracy on which too little national attention has so far been focused.

Hart Stilwell is a native Texan, some of whose ancestors were in Texas before Moses Austin, others for the war against Mexico in 1836. A graduate of the University of Texas, Mr. Stilwell is a freelance newspaperman, magazine writer, and author of several books. His novel, *Border City*, published by Doubleday in 1945, will have special interest for the readers of this CG series of articles: it deals penetratingly and sympathetically with the marginal status and exploitation of Mexican Americans in Texas in the early years of the war. Other books by Mr. Stilwell are *Uncovered Wagon*, a novel of early-day Texas, published in 1947 by Doubleday, and *Hunting and Fishing in Texas and Fishing in Mexico*, both published by Knopf. He is now finishing a novel dealing with the subject of academic freedom at a state university.

The illustrations in all four pieces of this group on Mexican Americans are by Miné Okubo.

CALIFORNIA AND THE WETBACK

CAREY McWILLIAMS

PERHAPS the mass round-up of aliens now being conducted on the West Coast can be explained by the belief—true or false—that a depression “is around the corner.” At any rate, the deportation campaign, starting around the first of the year, really got under way in April with teams of special agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service searching every Mexican settlement in Southern California for illegal entrants.

The stories of these raids are most revealing. On April 20, 12 border patrol inspectors, aided by local police, rounded up 382 Mexican nationals in Oxnard for deportation. “Starting at 4:30 a.m.,” the story reads, “officers combed the city picking men up off the streets, in labor camps, in apartments, hotels and trailer camps. Every local squad car was pressed into service to handle the record number of aliens. By 6 a.m. the City Jail was overflowing with 240 of the nationals and the remainder were kept in a citrus labor camp on East 5th Street.” Road blocks established on U.S. highway 101, near Montalvo, in the same locality, netted 128 aliens in one day. On April 12, 131 Mexican aliens were arrested in Los Angeles. On April 28, “raiding parties of Federal immigration agents arrested 100 Mexican aliens in Bakersfield in a series of raids last night and this morning. . . . In a similar raid at Delano, 20 immigration agents blocked off a 16-block section of the Delano Mexican colony and arrested 35 aliens in a house-to-house search.” On April 22, alien Portuguese

fishermen were arrested in San Diego; they had come from the Madeira Islands, to Costa Rica, and from there to California.

Why this sudden interest of the Immigration and Naturalization Service in illegally resident aliens? The round-ups are being staged, according to William A. Carmichael, district chief of the service in Los Angeles, because complaints have been filed that illegally entered aliens have formed “a cheap labor source to the detriment of jobless citizens.” An inspector in San Diego informed the press that “unemployed American tuna fishermen protested to Washington authorities that as many as 350 of their number have been displaced by nonresident aliens in recent years.” The pressure campaign to get the illegally entered aliens out of the labor market began immediately after the celebrated El Paso “incident” in October 1948, when the Immigration Service permitted thousands of Mexicans to swarm across the border (see *Hart Stilwell's “The Wetback Tide”* earlier in these pages). A week later the press carried a story to the effect that President William Green of the American Federation of Labor had made strenuous representations to Washington to get the illegal entrants out. The story carried the headline, in itself revealing, “Plot to Lure Mexican Workers to U.S. Charged.”

There is an all-too-familiar pattern about the current raids. The pattern is somewhat as follows: During periods of manpower shortage in this country, aliens

COMMON GROUND

flock across the border and the Immigration Service seems powerless to prevent their entry or to get them back across the border. As long as the labor shortage exists, the labor groups in this country register only feeble protests, and the employer groups naturally maintain a discreet silence. But once the pendulum swings the other way—once the first evidences of a tightening up of employment occurs—the labor groups begin to put pressure on Washington to deport the illegal entrants. Once this pressure has reached a certain intensity, Washington always issues the necessary orders. By the time this point has been reached, the local labor markets are flooded and the employers then ignore the round-up of aliens. The point to be emphasized is simply this: that the Immigration and Naturalization Service, in the current repetition of this familiar process, has failed to function as though it were an autonomous service with certain clearly defined duties and responsibilities but has acted solely in response to pressures.

The present round-ups in California have an interesting background. In February 1948, the State Department and the Mexican government announced that a new agreement had been reached which would supplant the wartime agreement governing the importation of labor. Under the new agreement most of the wartime controls were eliminated. Employers were given the right to recruit labor in a wide arc of Mexican territory upon the issuance of a certificate of need by the U.S. Employment Service. As might have been expected, the certificate was issued almost before the ink was dry on the new agreement. I pointed out at the time that it was indeed strange that the Employment Service could make an estimation of need in advance of the season but, nevertheless, the certificate was promptly issued. In February 1948,

there were already, of course, thousands of wetbacks in this country, many of whom were nationals imported under the former agreement who had never returned to Mexico; others were recent arrivals.

Following the announcement of the new arrangement, thousands of additional wetbacks entered the United States. Under the former agreement, a certain procedure had to be followed in recruiting labor and certain safeguards established. Under the new arrangement, employers did not have to recruit labor: they simply sat back and waited for the illegal entrants to appear. Within a matter of months, a well-organized smuggling system was in operation in California. Mexicans crossed the border into Imperial Valley, contacted a labor agent, and, for sums ranging from \$150 to \$250, were taken by car to Indio, California, the transfer point. At Indio they transferred into another car and, with a scout car ahead on the highway, proceeded to Oxnard, the main redistribution point in the system. Incidentally, the bus fare from Imperial Valley to Oxnard would be around five or six dollars. In Oxnard the most careful arrangements had been made to handle the wetbacks. Certain cheap hotels and rooming houses had been set aside for the exclusive use of the illegal entrants, complete with bars and other interesting services. Guards watched the hotels to keep out the resident Mexican Americans and other intruders. From the hotels, the nationals were taken to and from the fields in trucks. The police could not have failed to know about these arrangements, for at one time as many as 4,000 illegal entrants were working out of Oxnard. The business agent of the ILWU local at Port Hueneme, near Oxnard, came to see me nearly a year ago with full details about the traffic and evidence to support his contention

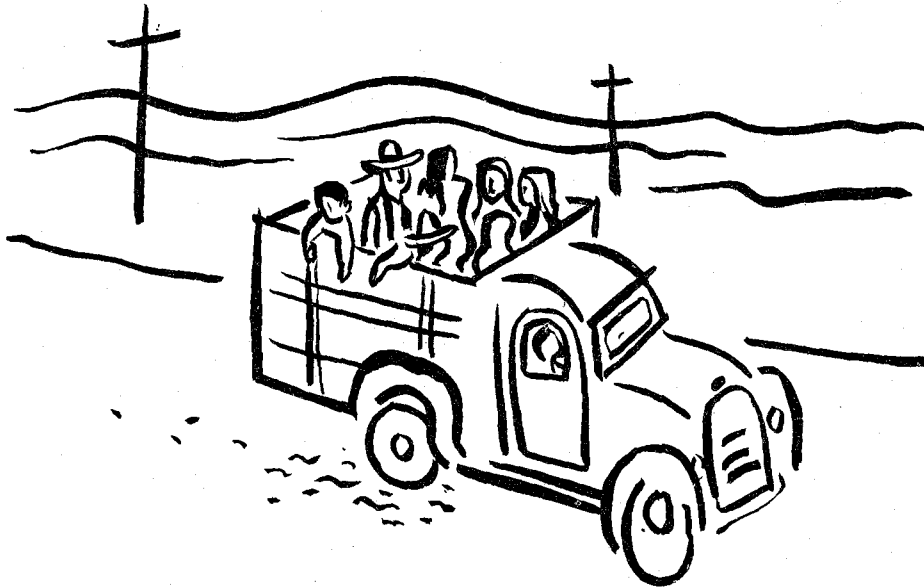
CALIFORNIA AND THE WETBACK

that the presence of the wetbacks was having a demoralizing effect on the local labor market. The Immigration Service, however, took no action at the time.

One could see that the turning point in this familiar process had been reached in the fall of 1948. Stanton Delaplane of the San Francisco Chronicle, in a series of excellent articles, pointed out that within a few miles of Fresno children of farm workers were going without food for twenty-four hours at a stretch. In the Coalinga-Huron district, 1,700 families were destitute, existing on handouts from the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the local service clubs. "The first thing you notice at the Firebaugh school," Delaplane reported, "are the shoes. Eight-year-olds walking around in sport wedgies.

December 11, 1948); "Relief Agencies Foresee New Wholesale Want in West Side Labor Camps" (Bee, December 8, 1948); "Migrant Influx Jams Hospitals in Bakersfield" (Bee, December 16, 1948); "Kern Crime is Blamed on Farm Worker Poverty" (Bee, February 17, 1949); "Valley Officials Will Tackle Farm Hunger Problem" (Bee, March 10, 1949); "Labor Camp Rent Shows Increase of 50 Per Cent" (Bee, March 19, 1949); and "Labor Camps in Valley are Found in Poor Condition" (Bee, March 17, 1949). Before the 1948 season was over, in other words, it was painfully apparent that the labor market had been glutted.

But the glut in the labor market had been apparent much earlier, apparent at



Youngsters with their father's work shoes. High shoes, low shoes, button shoes; but not children's shoes." The story of what had happened, in fact, is implicit in the headlines: "Polio, Diarrhea Cases Increase in Kern County" (Fresno Bee, November 16, 1948); "Children Living in Labor Camps are Called 'Lost'" (Bee,

precisely the time when the U.S. Employment Service had issued its original certification of labor need. For, if one turns back the files, the following headlines can be found: "Farm Work Sought for 5,000 Without Jobs" (Bee, January 9, 1948); and "Needy Migrants Create Relief Problem" (Bee, February 11, 1948).

COMMON GROUND

By the end of 1948, it had become apparent that the glut in the labor market had reached a point where some reduction was absolutely necessary. At this point the Immigration Service, acting in response to pressure from the labor groups, decided to perform its duties. In relation to wetbacks the Immigration Service might be re-titled the "Immigration Auxiliary of the U.S. Employment Service" for it constantly seems to function in this connection as an arm of the Employment Service.

Once the Immigration Service decides to perform the duties with which it is charged, it usually makes up for lost time. On February 3, 1949, the Service announced that from 3,000 to 4,000 wetbacks were being deported from California every month. One wonders where the Service was when so many came in. In fact the deportation traffic became so heavy that the Service had to take over two detention barracks at Camp Elliott, near San Diego, to house the deportees as they were rounded up. The size of this camp population has varied from 250 to 300 daily occupants since the first of the year. "The Immigration Service," reads a story in the Daily News (February 3, 1949), "deports Mexican aliens by the simple expedient of loading them on a bus and driving them back across the border to Tijuana." Note this, however: "The Mexican officials have no funds or authority to move the deported citizens on to their homes in the interior. Generally, they simply turn them loose, often with the results that the harassed border inspectors know only too well. As one inspector put it, 'Sometimes I think they beat us back across the border.'" In a raid on one hide-out in Chula Vista, 17 aliens were found in a one-room unheated shack. Five slept in one iron bed, under one blanket, four in another. "The others slept on the floor, huddled together

for warmth. They awakened sleepy-eyed and blinking into the flashlights of the I-men." (Daily News, February 1, 1949). In none of these familiar feature stories, however, is there so much as a suggestion that the Immigration Service is in large measure responsible for the conditions of which it complains.

It is important, also, to note over what wide areas the illegal entrants are apprehended. The Portland Oregonian of July 3, 1948, reported the arrest of 80 Mexicans for illegal entry. The New York Times of June 13, 1948, reported that Immigration agents in Chicago had arrested 39 Mexicans, including one woman, who had made a five-day 1,500-mile junket from Texas in the false-bottom of a rickety truck loaded with melons. "How the thirty-nine survived confinement in the truck bottom, referred to by one observer as the 'moving Black Hole of Calcutta,' puzzled the police. The false bottom was not deep enough for a person to stand." In this instance, the truck driver explained that he had made a deal with one Alfredo Gomez to import the aliens for a fee of \$800 but that he had actually been paid only \$170. I described this particular north-from-Texas traffic in great detail in *Ill Fares the Land*, published in 1942, so it can hardly be regarded as a novel or recent development.

The racketeering aspect of the traffic in wetbacks, which resembles a form of chattel slavery, was clearly revealed in a recent court action in San Jose, California. It seems that a well-organized "ring" exists which sells citizenship papers to Mexican nationals. The ring operates in this manner. Agents search the courthouse records in county seats throughout the Southwest, copying data pertaining to the birth of children with Mexican names. The data is then forwarded to Mexico and transcribed on false baptismal certificates which are sold

CALIFORNIA AND THE WETBACK

to Mexicans who want to become U.S. citizens. Holders of the certificates then come to the United States, get in touch with the local representative of the ring, and then send the baptismal certificate to the recorder in the county named and request the issuance of a birth certificate. Thus did one Hippolito Sandoval acquire a certificate showing that he is M. Mendez, born in Kansas, and one Jesus Perez acquire documents indicating that he is Joseph Hernandez-Sanchez born in Chicago.

The viciousness of the present round-ups consists in the fact that once such a campaign has been decreed there is only one way to carry it into effect: namely to make systematic house-to-house raids in every Mexican settlement in the state. In the course of these raids, it is inevitable that some long-resident Mexicans will be picked up because they, too, are illegal entrants. The mere announcement that the Immigration Service is conducting a round-up of this character operates, of course, to spread fear and panic throughout the Mexican settlements. Many of the long-resident illegal entrants have married American citizens and have American-born children. Once launched, however, the raids cannot be stopped; nor can the inspectors, on their own initiative, distinguish between recent wetbacks and wetbacks who have lived in the country for a decade or more. The hardship cases become inextricably mixed up with the others.

The timing of the current raids is closely related to the demoralization of the California farm labor situation. During the war a degree of stabilization was achieved in California, first by the imposition of governmental controls; and, second, by the manpower shortage. With an unlimited market and guaranteed prices, the growers were willing to acquiesce in a measure of rationalization and

planning, albeit with much audible grumbling and muttering about "regimentation" and so forth. But the moment the war was over, they began to agitate for the removal of all forms of wartime control. From the end of the war to the present time, California growers have been reverting to the prewar "Grapes of Wrath" situation as rapidly as possible. In this connection, it is entirely misleading to assume that the growers simply are opposed to planning for the recruitment and distribution and efficient utilization of farm labor. Actually they are ardent advocates of planning, i.e. planned chaos in the labor market. These growers want—in fact they insist—that the labor market shall remain unorganized. With the lifting of wartime controls, wages have been cut; the labor market has been systematically flooded; and labor camp standards have steadily deteriorated. As this demoralization has spread, local relief agencies have begun to complain bitterly about the burden of supporting migrant families in the off-season. As a matter of fact, the stories emanating from the San Joaquin Valley this winter parallel, in almost every respect, the stories that began to appear in the early 1930s. In not one significant respect have the growers profited from their wartime experience with planned labor recruitment nor have they carried over into peacetime practice any of the measures which, during the war, provided a degree of stabilization. In reading the news from the San Joaquin Valley this year I have been constantly reminded that this was where I came in—two decades ago.

The demoralization of the farm labor market has an important relevance to the current deportation delirium. As long as the farm labor market in the Southwest is unorganized, Mexicans will be lured across the border during periods of labor shortage, real or imagined, and, just as

COMMON GROUND

surely, they will be promptly ousted once the shortage disappears. One of the best methods, therefore, to cope with the wetback situation would be to carry into immediate effect the recommendations which the LaFollette Committee made to Congress in 1942 dealing with farm labor. Unfortunately the recommendations have been forgotten. For the record, here they are:

1. To enact an Agricultural Employment Stabilization Bill, providing for the decasualization and stabilization of agricultural employment through a system of employment exchanges, accompanied by special social security guarantees and unemployment insurance.

2. To enact an Agricultural Wage Board Bill, whereby a system of agricultural wage boards would determine fair wages for certain operations as distinguished from minimum wages.

3. To enact an Agricultural Labor

Standards Act, which would extend the benefits of the Fair Labor Standards Act to agricultural workers: minimum wages, maximum hours, and provision for overtime.

4. To enact an Agricultural Labor Recruitment Act, which would regulate the activities of labor contractors and farm employers in recruiting labor.

5. To enact an Agricultural Labor Relations Act, giving farm workers the right to organize and safeguarding the principle of collective bargaining.

Carey McWilliams is an old and valued contributor to COMMON GROUND. His *North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States* was recently published by Lippincott as one of the *Peoples of America* series and gives extensive background material on this subject of Mexican Americans.

THE MEXICAN AMERICAN: A NATIONAL CONCERN

THE NEW MEXICO PATTERN

R. L. CHAMBERS

ON THE LAST DAY of the 1949 session of the New Mexico State Legislature, as final debate was about to begin on a state Fair Employment Practices Act, a Spanish American legislator from the northern part of the state turned to the press table and said: "I don't like this business. Why bring up the race issue? There's no discrimination in New Mexico."

A reporter for one of the wire services looked up from his papers.

"No discrimination?" He poked his pencil at the legislator's chest. "Suppose you try to get a decent job in Carlsbad.

See if you can go into the swimming pool in Hobbs. Go into any public dance or amusement place in Loving."

He paused and put down his pencil. The legislator backed off.

"Why, Spanish Americans can't even get a haircut in 90 per cent of the barber shops in Lovington, Roswell, Eunice, or any of the rest of eastern New Mexico."

The reporter turned back to his notes and didn't hear the legislator mutter he hadn't known about all that.

He probably didn't. Born and raised in northern New Mexico, where discrimination has yet to make substantial headway,

the Spanish American lawmaker quite possibly knew little of the existence of discrimination in the "Land of Enchantment." After all, here he was, a Hispano, elected to the State Legislature. He was but one of 27 Hispanos so elected. Though, had he taken the trouble to look into the matter, he would have found that of the 27 only one was elected from southern and eastern New Mexico.

II

The legislator is no exception. Most New Mexicans do not realize that Hispanos—Spanish Americans, Mexican Americans, and Mexican nationals—in fully half the state are victims of discrimination. As a matter of fact, few commentators on minority problems know the extent of discrimination in the state. Most of them feel New Mexico to be the shining exception to the pattern of discrimination that stretches from Texas to Southern California.

Northern New Mexico is relatively free of discrimination. This is the part of the state most tourists visit. Northern New Mexico is a beautiful land of mountains and valleys, of picturesque Indian pueblos. Most of the state's Spanish-speaking people, about 175,000, live here on subsistence farms, in small villages where English is seldom heard. It is in this area that the Penitentes every Good Friday re-enact the suffering and crucifixion of Christ in minute, and, to the casual observer, terrifying detail. Contact with the Anglo is minimal. This is the land of the descendants of the Spanish conquerors who sought riches four centuries ago.

Few visitors to the state spend any time in sparsely settled eastern and southern New Mexico. In fact, northern New Mexicans don't like to admit that the huge section of flat wasteland is a part of New Mexico. Various called Little

Texas and the Bible Belt (because of the great number of Baptist Fundamentalists living there), the northern New Mexican considers the area a part of Texas, New Mexico's eastern neighbor. Here discrimination against Mexicans and Mexican Americans exists on a par with the practices in Texas against Latin Americans.

Discrimination in New Mexico is a fairly recent thing. It came with the emigration of huge numbers of Anglo Texans, Oklahomans, and Southerners into New Mexico's south and east, where rangeland and oil fields waited for exploitation by a people more interested in money than the native New Mexican. Discrimination has flowered in these two portions of the state in the last 20 years. The mores of the South have there replaced the tolerance and live-and-let-live way of life that has made New Mexico world-famous as the state where three cultures, Spanish, Indian, and American, have been integrated. But so gradual has been the tightening clamp of discrimination against the Hispano that even those in the state do not fully realize the extent of the discriminatory practices which are even now slowly moving northward.

With the immigration of the Anglo Texans and other Southerners into New Mexico in the '20s, came a new way of doing things. The first result was the segregation of Negroes. This culminated in the 1925 Legislature with the enactment of a measure permitting segregation of Negro school children in communities where the residents so desired to isolate students of "African descent."

Then came the turn of the Mexican American. Too late, those interested in the problem realized that the passage of the Negro segregation bill had been the wedge opening the Bible Belt to discrimination.

The desert wastelands of Little Texas

had never had much attraction for the Hispano who early settled the state. He preferred the northern part where he could eke out a living from his land. Southern and eastern New Mexico, like West Texas, lent itself to the development of huge cotton and sugar beet fields. The Mexican Americans in this area, used in the fields, represented a distinct minority—about one Hispano to every three Anglos. But with the war came what Federal District Judge Colin Neblett describes as a “bad situation.” The wetbacks flocked across the border into New Mexico. Before the start of the war there had been few wetbacks; they were not needed. The New Mexican cotton industry has developed only recently through use of irrigation. But now Judge Neblett, who has been riding the vast New Mexico circuit for more than 30 years, says that every month he holds court in the southern New Mexico community of Las Cruces, “We have anywhere from 60 to 90 wetbacks up for sentencing. And that represents only about 10 per cent of those who have crossed the border.”

The wetbacks cross the Rio Grande near El Paso, Texas, where farmers from New Mexico and West Texas wait in large trucks to pick them up. The Immigration Service is not too interested in arresting more than a token number of Mexicans. “I’ve talked to the farmers down there,” Judge Neblett says, “and they tell me they’ll lose their crops unless they can hire these men.” Neblett sees the situation in all its simplicity: when the war started there also began a labor shortage. The farmers needed help, and the only place they could get it was across the border. Despite the war’s end and the return to normalcy of the New Mexico labor market, the growers still want cheap wetback labor. There has been no letup noticeable. “Why sometimes,” says Judge

Neblett, “we don’t have jails enough to hold them all.”

Few of the wetbacks remain in New Mexico after the crops. They are paid off and return south of the border. The farmers keep them on the farms during the picking season and then dump them. There is little reason for any of the wetbacks to stay on unless they can be given steady employment. But those few who do remain have each year added to the small Mexican American population of the area. And as the number grows, so does the discriminatory pattern.

To the Little Texan, all “Mexicans” are the same. Thus he groups together the Mexican wetback, the Mexican American, and the Spanish American who does not hold too high a position in the community.

Socially the Hispano in the Bible Belt is restricted to his group. In almost all Little Texas communities, a Hispano veteran is never permitted to join the American Legion, for instance, unless there is a post set up exclusively for Hispanos. But discrimination doesn’t stop here. Last year, when the Carlsbad Legion donated its hall for a public dance, Hispanos were stopped at the door. They were told that by the order of some post official no “Mexicans” were to be admitted. One young veteran pointed up the stupidity of the entire discriminatory scheme when he asked the guard at the door if he would be permitted to enter. “My mother is Spanish and my father Anglo,” he explained.

The Hispano lives in shacks with the few Negroes in the community. His life revolves about the affairs of his section of town, invariably called “Old Town” by Anglos who take pride in the districts only when they can show visitors “the quaint way these Mexicans live.”

Job discrimination is overwhelming. In Carlsbad, for instance, the sole big in-

THE NEW MEXICO PATTERN

dustry is potash mining. Of the three firms in the city, two absolutely refuse to hire Hispanos. New Mexico's Senator Dennis Chavez has continually charged that a dual wage standard for the same type of employment exists in many big companies: one salary for Hispanos, another for Anglos. Few of the firms have refuted Chavez' charges. Discrimination in employment exists even in the northern part of the state, though it is more subtle. A Hispano cannot often hold a responsible job. Some employers argue that customers will not feel at ease in dealing with a Spanish American. A Spanish name on an application blank for some types of employment means no job.

The only place of importance in which the Hispano in Little Texas is not generally restricted is in the public school system. Unlike Negroes, Spanish-speaking children are not forced to attend segregated schools in this part of the state. A constitutional provision explicitly forbids any segregation of "children of Spanish descent [who] shall forever enjoy perfect equality with other children in all public schools and educational institutions of the state. . . ."

Perhaps those who wrote the state constitution 39 years ago foresaw what many New Mexicans cannot now see.

Despite the constitution, efforts are constantly being made to deprive the Hispano child of his only contact with the Anglo world. A school board meeting was recently called in an eastern New Mexico community for the express purpose of setting up a "Spanish school" in an abandoned church. State officials who heard of the plan quickly pointed out the existence of the state constitutional provision. But many communities get around the constitution without too much trouble: schools are constructed in the districts where Hispanos are forced to live.

The school situation for the Hispano child, however, is nowhere near as bad as for the Negro, who may be segregated at the pleasure of city school officials. Little Texas communities have gone so far as to transport Negro school children many miles to the next community to attend classes, in cases where only one Negro school exists in a wide area. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is investigating the situation.

Mexican Americans find it impossible to cross the barrier erected by the dominant group. They are always given menial tasks when employed and they live in constant poverty. Their diet consists of bread, chili, and beans. The Rev. Robert Hammond says that a full 75 per cent of the Spanish-speaking people in his eastern New Mexico parish own no real estate and have not \$25 in the bank. He points out that there is no permanent employment for the Hispanos in the Bible Belt. They may work as laborers for one or two days a week and then must wait until the need for laborers again becomes so great that employers are willing to dig deep in the labor market. The priest feels that unless industry comes to New Mexico and a need develops for workers, poverty will continue to be the main factor in the lives of most Spanish-speaking New Mexicans.

The ever-present need for the barest necessities of life is no atmosphere in which leaders develop. Children leave school at an early age to aid in the family's fight for survival. Thus they are not equipped to do battle in the Anglo world where correct grammar and good speaking are essential.

When the Carlsbad park foreman announced in the Carlsbad Current-Argus that a "swimming place for Spanish American and Negro children next sum-

mer will be prepared between the present pool at the Municipal Beach and Tansill Dam," a small group of Hispanos in Carlsbad tried to oppose the move. They wrote letters to the editor of the newspaper protesting city-sponsored discrimination. Perhaps they could not use the billiard halls and barbershops of the Anglo. That had been going on for years. But this was something new. Their letters, left in crude form by the editor, hurt them. The "ignorant Mexican" theme was seized upon by Anglo letter-writers, and the protest seemed to be getting nowhere. Luckily a few Anglo citizens of Carlsbad also joined the Hispanos. Together they presented the facts in a barrage of letters that astounded the city council. The incident was ended by the park foreman who said that "it was the intent to improve the lower end of the beach which Negroes have used so it would be safe for them." He pointed out that segregation was not intended by his statement.

One of the significant things that developed during the Carlsbad controversy was the emphasis of the letter-writers that they opposed segregation of any kind, whether directed against the Mexican American and/or the Negro. Wrote Mrs. Josephine Salinas: "In the sports page of today's paper is an announcement of a swimming place planned for so-called Spanish Americans and Negroes. I want to know why for Negroes and Mexicans? Right now the city of Juarez (Mexico) not far from us are celebrating the 289th anniversary of the founding of that city by the Spaniards and Franciscan Fathers. We didn't discriminate against Negroes then, remember?" A veteran of the 200th Anti-Aircraft Battalion, whose members were taken prisoner on Bataan, wrote: "I don't want sympathy from anyone. Just want to be treated like an American if that word stands for equal rights."

III

A few active groups have tried to combat discrimination in the state. Led by the League of United Latin-American Citizens (LULAC) through its New Mexico head, Daniel Valdes, the groups had to fight hard to put across the bare fact that there is discrimination in the state.

During the legislative fight on the FEPC act, a state senator from Albuquerque declared that he had never been discriminated against. Joseph Montoya told the press: "We don't need a Fair Employment law here. There isn't any discrimination. Why should I vote for it? I've never been told I couldn't do anything because I'm Spanish." It was during this fight for passage of the FEPC that the small groups battling discrimination lined up together. B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League sent its Denver representative to Santa Fé; the Protestant Ministerial Alliances in key northern communities issued statements; the NAACP was on hand. And, best of all, the Catholic Church took a firm stand behind the groups and lent its all-powerful name to the fight. Archbishop Edwin V. Byrne of the Santa Fé archdiocese, which includes New Mexico and part of Texas, made well-timed statements to the press and legislators. LULAC's Valdes spearheaded the fight with strong assistance from State Representative Sixto Leyva, a Spanish American legislator from a small Indian community.

But it took the practiced hand of a seasoned lobbyist to pass the FEPC Act.

The small groups which joined up to fight for the bill had never had much actual practice in the political arena. LULAC and the Anti-Defamation League had for years been talking of discrimination. But it had become almost an automatic performance by 1949. Those who wanted to hear heard of discrimination.

THE NEW MEXICO PATTERN

Those who didn't, the vast majority, simply didn't read the one-inch newspaper statements of the group. So it was in reality an unpracticed little group that lobbied for the FEPC bill as its first real test. It had never before worked together as a unit; it knew nothing of the intricacies of legislative lobbying.

The FEPC bill had been bottled up successfully in committee for almost the entire session, after it had been introduced the first week. Anglo Little Texas lawmakers joined a small and secret group of northern Hispanos in keeping the bill under wraps. Like other southwestern states where discrimination exists, New Mexico has "upper-class Spaniards" who join the Anglos in discriminating against Mexican Americans and the Mexican wetback.

It was here that the lobbyist took over. The man, an easy-going middle-aged easterner who came to New Mexico 20 years ago to see what the west was like and stayed, took pity on the group. When the NAACP, which had worked hard for an anti-school-segregation bill, was tricked into believing that its bill would pass and was double-crossed, the lobbyist swung into action—free of charge. He knew that the FEPC bill would die in committee unless something unusual was done. He planned with Representative Leyva and six other Spanish-speaking legislators to force the bill to the attention of the legislature on the last day of the session, when the lawmakers would be anxious for adjournment.

As debate was about to begin on an important appropriations bill, Representative Leyva rose to his feet. He was recognized. He pulled out the President's Civil Rights Committee Report and started reading. For half an hour, the legislators and the audience listened. Leyva kept reading. The speaker asked him to please hurry. Leyva replied that

under the rules of the House he could speak for three hours.

Suddenly it dawned on the legislators that they were listening to a filibuster for a civil rights bill. The speaker asked for a recess and called Leyva and the majority floor leader into a conference. That conference lasted a solid hour.

The floor leader, himself a Spanish American, had had the unpleasant task of leading the undercover opposition to the FEPC measure. The state machine, to soothe Little Texas, had promised a hands-off policy on the bill. Actually it passed word along that passage of the measure would hurt the machine. But Leyva was adamant. He knew he had the machine on the run. And, at the last minute, it gave in. The bill passed, 25-24, on a strictly geographic and cultural vote. Not a single Hispano voted against FEPC.

With the passage of this bill, the groups fighting discrimination have at last found a focal point around which they can gather. Though Little Texas legislators succeeded in stripping the bill of any appropriation, Valdes feels certain he can raise enough money through the recently founded New Mexico Council on Human Relations, which includes the Ministerial Alliances, LULAC, B'nai B'rith, the NAACP, and other groups.

IV

There is a saying among New Mexico newspapermen that only two things matter to the people of New Mexico: politics and religion. Where the Church soothes the soul of the poor Hispano, politics butters his bread.

Politics in New Mexico is conducted along lines long ago junked in other states. The Democratic Party's powerful state machine doles out thousands of jobs. It is the largest single employer in the state. It has become to thousands of northern and southern Hispanos their sole source

of income—their bread, chili, and beans.

The northern Spanish-speaking New Mexican is actually only a notch above his southern brother on the economic scale. His subsistence farms are good only for chili and a few other staples. He makes no cash income from his farm labor. There is no industry in the area. Until the atomic era opened Los Alamos in the heart of northern New Mexico's mountains, the Hispano of "Spanish stock" was as poor as the resident Mexican American and the newer wetback. Now he is slightly better off.

New Mexico has only two requirements for voting: age and residence. A person need not speak English or pass a literacy test to cast a ballot. As a matter of fact, all ballots carry a Spanish translation of the party names and the posts sought by the candidates. Therefore the quarter of a million Hispanos in the state have no trouble going to the polls. Precinct leaders find which family heads need jobs badly, and when the State Highway Department repairs a road or a state agency needs a man, then the family head is hired. If he is fortunate, he is given a permanent job, and on his income a family of 10 can live. It means, of course, a year of bread, chili, and beans—but that is food, and the Hispano is rarely one to criticize his lot or to blame anyone or any system for his misfortune. In return for his job, the Hispano is expected to vote properly—which he does with regularity in New Mexico, so that the Democratic machine has absolute control of the state. This stranglehold has kept independents from entering the political field, men who through political action could set in motion projects that might put an end to discrimination which is ever moving northward in the state.

The machine demands obedience from its politicians. It has, of course, been making straight overtures for the votes

of the Anglo Little Texan as well as the Hispano. Even now U.S. Senator Chavez is fighting for his political life, and it appears certain that he or the person he names to succeed himself politically can never win another election in New Mexico. The Anglo Little Texan never marks the space on the ballot opposite a Spanish name. The machine knows this and must place Anglos on the ballot to gain Anglo Bible Belt votes. Therefore Chavez will find himself or his successor opposed in the primaries by a machine Anglo.

The machine evidently must walk a tightrope to satisfy both the Hispano and the Anglo and keep itself entrenched. So far this has been fairly easy, except for emergencies, as in the case of the Fair Employment bill when the machine found the situation impossible to handle. The Hispano receives jobs; the Bible Belt Anglo doesn't need jobs, for he is fairly prosperous, but he does get such things as new highways and the really big patronage jobs.

V

When the Hispano in north and south is able to earn a decent living, the hold of the machine and the spread of discrimination can be ended. With a job and fair pay, he will not have to rely on the state for his bread. His children can stay in school longer. He can improve his home. The myth of the "dirty Mexican" will disappear.

In southern New Mexico the wetback has caused the price of labor to sink far below what the Mexican American in the area can possibly live on. There is no doubt that a rigidly enforced agreement between Mexico and the United States whereby farm employers must show that local workers are not available before they can import Mexican labor could improve the situation greatly. Without the wetback, there would be more work for the

PROGRAM FOR ACTION

resident Mexican American at a better wage scale. But it is in the northern part of the state where the wetback has never ventured that most of the state's poverty-stricken Hispanos live. Most of these people work the land. But they cannot own good land since it is expensive. They must become workers on fruit farms or ranches, run their tiny subsistence farms, or compete with the laborer in the city.

There is plenty of land in New Mexico, but most of it is pocketed with arroyos, the result of overgrazing by the livestock men who plundered the state. Most of the state has rich soil. But crops cannot grow without water, and the only water that enters the state in abundant quantity roars down the Rio Grande during the Spring runoff and is wasted.

Dams, flood-control projects, soil conservation, land rehabilitation, electrification—all these integrated into one huge federal project can inject new life into the state. Once the Hispano is able to

earn his living, the cycle of discrimination stands a good chance of being broken. Otherwise it will continue to spread until it loops the state. A Rio Grande River Authority might mean the end of many bad conditions and the beginning of a new life for not only the 250,000 to 300,000 Hispanos in New Mexico but the 330,000 Anglos as well. It could mean a new way of life for the people on both sides of the river that cascades from the mountains of northern New Mexico through the mesas of the central portion of the state down to the arid desert of southern New Mexico where now the wetbacks are gathering for their annual crossing.

R. L. Chambers, born in the East, is a Southwesterner by choice. A graduate of the University of Colorado, he is a freelance writer, serving several newspapers and magazines. He lives in Santa Fé.

THE MEXICAN AMERICAN: A NATIONAL CONCERN

PROGRAM FOR ACTION

ERNESTO GALARZA

THE CONDITIONS of life and work of the Spanish-speaking minority in the United States are no longer a problem only of the borderlands. A historical process has been at work lifting this problem above local and sectional concern. It now involves communities as distant from the United States-Mexican border as Chicago, New York, and Detroit. It shows up in the rural slums that lie on an arc stretching from Arkansas to northern California. It is documented in federal reports on employment and in

community conferences on human relations in the urban industrial East as well as in the rural agricultural Southwest. It has become a skeleton in the closet of our Latin American policy.

The Mexican agricultural migrant and itinerant railway maintenance worker have been the primary agents in this process. Over the past fifty years they have moved into practically every state of the Union. Today, while the bulk of over 2,500,000 of this minority is still anchored in California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico,

COMMON GROUND

thousands can be found in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Kansas.

Within the group, the inferiority complex has been disappearing. From the uncomplaining ranks of Mexican "stoop labor" have emerged trained men and women to spoil the myth of the innate servility and incompetence attached to this group, with some romantic concessions, by the finance farmers and railway corporations that long have exploited them. Two world wars proved the courage, tested the loyalty, broadened the experience, and tempered the will of young men born and bred in a no-man's-land of social rejection and lack of civic opportunity for adult citizenship.

In the cotton fields, the truck farm, and the corporation ranches, as well as in the armed services, the Mexican has mingled with other minority groups more experienced in the defense of human rights and dignity, especially the Negro. He has rubbed shoulders with the militant Nisei cr's who did not come back from Monte Cassino to take it lying down. Through these contacts, methods of action have been learned and technics of organization have been discovered and communicated. The language of protest, pure and simple and almost always unheeded, has been supplemented by self-education and the discovery of the methods of redress available in the larger society by which he is surrounded. In this process not a few Mexicans have discovered the weaknesses of civic and political organization, locally and nationally, as well as the mirages of international relations which have affected their welfare. For half a century they have experienced, intuitively rather than rationally, the red tape, obscure diplomatic deals, misrepresentations, and legal taffy in which the civil liberties and economic opportunities of Mexicans in the United States have been entangled. But as the American

school system has inevitably rescued a few of the more fortunate ones from the colonias of the rural countryside or the gashouse districts of the large cities, understanding has become more rational, supported by knowledge and experience.

As the individual capacity of certain Mexicans has been developed and as their collective insight has become sharper and more meaningful, the attempt to stop the clock on them by some social groups has also taken on different forms. In Washington an Associated Farmers' lobby prevents the extension of social security, minimum wages, and other forms of protection to the Mexican rural workers. The same lobby inspires highly confidential agreements with the Mexican government for the recruitment of Nationals or *braceros*, whose major strategic function is to



depress wages in California and Texas. Men who are highly sympathetic to the policies of the Associated Farmers sit securely in control of the machinery of the Inter-American System, thereby heading off constructive multilateral action to tackle the problems of inter-American labor migration at its roots.

On this and other aspects of the changing context of the problem of the Mexican minority in the United States, an abundant literature has developed. This literature runs all the way from the

PROGRAM FOR ACTION

serious, compact, and sustained scholarship of Dr. Paul Taylor's studies to the articles, newspaper accounts, and books of the "protest" type. In between are the shelves of catalogued masters' and doctoral theses, government reports, case studies, and monographs numbering thousands of items. Bibliographically, at least, the Mexican minority has come of age.

II

But now the time has come for this minority to find the connection between the library card index and life. In the living and working conditions of this group certain problems have been isolated, defined, studied, and analyzed. Now they must be resolved. Which are most urgent?

Wages and income. The Mexican agricultural workers, as well as those who work in the manufacturing, transport, and service industries, fall into the lowest income class. The purchasing power of semi-stable agricultural workers in California and Texas is comparable to that of the sharecroppers of Arkansas and Mississippi. As a group the Mexican workers have not been able to shake off the tradition of "cheap labor." Wage discrimination based on race has been uncovered by federal investigators even in the mining industry. In the absence of adequate wage and income studies of the group, the economic status of the Mexicans can be verified by simple observation of their community life. Slum housing, child labor, inadequate food, school absenteeism, indebtedness, unpaved streets, and the almost total absence of decent recreational facilities for the whole family immediately type the average Mexican community.

Employment. In the urban centers, the Mexican still finds barriers to the better-paid jobs. In industry individual skill is not infrequently discounted be-

cause of color. Employers in the service industries, where "the customer is always right," yield to prejudice and close certain avenues of economic advancement to dark-skinned citizens of Mexican ancestry. In agriculture the employment situation is somewhat less subtly arranged. The Mexican field workers, by and large, are dependent on contractors, whose controls of the total social life of the group are all-pervading. These contractors are the bridge improvised by the boss-culture of the employers and the servant-culture of the workers. The labor power that passes back and forth over that bridge pays a heavy toll in the form of petty larceny, short-weighting, usury, wage competition, rent gouging, company-store profits, alcoholism, and other types of catering to starved human needs. Even where the contractor happens to be a decent fellow, or where the corporation ranchers go into the labor market themselves, the Mexican farm worker fares little better. He may expect, as he has found in California, that the corporate interests will move into the machinery of farm-employment placement, through which, in part, the labor market can be kept in a profitable state of over-supply.

Foreign labor. Since 1942 a new element has been added to the wage and employment situation of the Mexican farm workers in the United States. This is the recruitment of *braceros* or Mexican Nationals, through agreements between the government of Mexico and the United States. These agreements were originally signed as a wartime measure, but they have been continued under the insistent pressure of the agricultural employers' associations who were looking for a counterpoise to the wage demands of Mexican workers long resident in this country.

Stripped of technicalities, the recruitment of Nationals is a new phase of the old quest for sources of low-cost,

COMMON GROUND

inexperienced, unorganized mass labor power. The original intention of the agreements as understood by some of their early advocates—the protection of wage and living standards as well as civil rights of imported workers and domestic labor in time of great national stress—has been sidetracked. Instead, there is now the concept of “task forces” of Mexican Nationals, maneuvered in divisions of 5,000 or more, and assigned to duty in any state of the Union where local Mexicans, Negroes, Filipinos, and Anglo-American whites threaten to organize or ask for higher wages.

The negotiation of these agreements, practically behind closed doors, and the determination of the conditions of such employment by self-appointed arbiters in Washington and Mexico City, establish a form of international economic government practiced without the consent of the governed—in this case the millions of agricultural workers whose wages and standards are immediately affected by such agreements. Relief from this kind of misgovernment has not yet been found by the Mexican workers in the United States, either through Washington officialdom or through the present administration in Mexico City.

Inter-American standards. Since the wartime *bracero* agreements have been repeatedly hailed as a shining example of the Good Neighbor policy in action, their essential function and results in peacetime must be pointed out to be a glaring violation of the spirit of that policy. This is indeed the opinion of the former Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Jaime Torres Bodet, stated publicly in October 1948.

By all the standards for decent living and working conditions laid down in the Chapultepec Conference and later in the Inter-American Conference of Bogotá, the agreements have been an economic

Trojan horse, an administrative subterfuge, and a long-run political boomerang. Here was an area in which the Inter-American System, through the Pan American Union, could have taken over administrative responsibility on a truly multilateral, representative basis. These agreements could have been drawn up with the participation of legitimate trade-union representatives. They could have been administered without yielding to special interests or political expediency. But, as it has turned out, the Pan American Union, which the workers support directly through public funds appropriated from taxes, has proved an utterly useless instrument for the maintenance of inter-American standards of work and living. In public affairs the misuse of a symbol must be challenged as promptly and as decisively as the subversion of a human right or a constitutional liberty. In this case, the kidnapping of the Good Neighbor symbolism by those who have shut the door of the House of the Americas on the workers is something to which the organized Mexican workers in the United States will have to give special attention.

Illegal labor. There is also the widespread exploitation of Mexican workers brought to this country illegally. These so-called wetbacks (see *Hart Stilwell's "The Wetback Tide,"* earlier in these pages) number probably not less than 60,000 in southern Texas alone. In some border areas—Imperial Valley, Brownsville, El Paso—the bulk of the unskilled farm labor is done by these people. In the San Joaquin Valley between Bakersfield and Modesto there are probably not less than 20,000 illegals. People who talk about labor pools could well describe these reservoirs of bootleg manpower as labor quicksands, for in them all efforts to raise income for the agricultural worker flounder.

PROGRAM FOR ACTION

Up to the present, the burden of blame and punishment for violation of the immigration laws of the United States falls on the wetback himself. He pays the penalty in the low wages he must accept, the mistreatment he must put up with, the constant fear of arrest, the loss of wages if he is picked up, and the hostility of the local Mexican community. That he is a symptom of a basic maladjustment in the economies of the two countries and a victim of the feebleness of inter-American standards is not generally recognized. Moreover, it is not only the bootleg contractor and the grapevine headhunter who paves the way for the wetback. In a sense he is forced to seek better conditions north of the border by the slow but relentless pressure of United States' agricultural, financial, and oil corporate interests on the entire economic and social evolution of the Mexican nation. Inflation, rising utility rates, the agrarian stalemate, and the flank attack on oil expropriation are some of the major causes of the persistent exodus of Mexican workers.

Racial tension. The Mexicans, by tradition and custom, are a racially tolerant group. The acute sense of personal dignity, a Spanish legacy, strengthens the notion that no man should be judged according to his color or his race. Normally, Mexican communities in the United States have preserved remarkably well this valuable cultural trait.

But the operation of the present wage system of contracting and employment and the strategic use by corporation agriculture of race blocs to maintain and encourage racial jealousies as a means to competitive wage bidding, is injecting bad blood into normal racial tolerance. Today there is emotional dynamite lying around loose between Mexican local workers and Mexican Nationals, between Mexican Nationals and Mexican illegals

—not to mention the possibilities for racial misunderstanding between Mexicans on the one hand and Filipinos, Negroes, and white Anglo-Americans on the other. Fortunately, this encouragement of racial antagonism is being held in check by the responsible leaders of all these racial groups. But for how long? Will their influence be strong enough to counteract the effects of prolonged unemployment?

Discrimination. In many communities Mexicans are still excluded from parks, from motion picture theatres, from swimming pools, and from other public places. Certain neighborhoods exclude Mexicans, however acceptable they may be culturally and professionally. There are still schools for Mexican children separate from those maintained for "white" children. In some important towns Mexicans do not patronize certain barber shops or stores. There are no "Keep out" signs, but instead of having a pleasant greeting for Mexican customers "they make one a bad face," as the saying goes. This type of social exclusion has been responsible for a good deal of the northward migration of Mexican workers and their families. Like the Negroes of the Deep South, the Mexicans have sought the more friendly towns and cities of central and northern California, Colorado, Wyoming, Indiana, and Ohio, where prejudice does not make a specific target out of them.

Closely tied to this problem is that of segregation. The location of the hundreds of Mexican colonies—invariably marked by the railroad tracks, cactus patch, city dump, and employment bureau signs—is in itself one huge, ubiquitous case of segregation.

Housing. This leads directly to the problem of housing, typically resolved by the Mexican workers in their patchwork neighborhoods commonly called colonies. Usually lying outside the corporate limits

of the towns and cities to which they are attached, these neighborhoods cling to the surrounding countryside like gray desiccated barnacles, from which some unseen inexorable hand constantly squeezes the vital humors and amenities of community living.

A trip through one of these *colonias* is easy to make. Any motorist traveling along US 99—California's Main Street, as it has been called—can see these typical California rural slums from the windows of his car. From the upper stories of the better hotels in Fresno, Modesto, Sacramento, or Bakersfield, good views can be obtained of shack rows, tent settlements, and privy subdivisions occupied by Mexican families. In the Shafter colony of Mexican agricultural workers the stench from backyard toilets in summer is intolerable. In the heart of the Mexican colony of Bakersfield, young children play barefoot in sewer water backed up by winter rains. The *colonias* rarely are taken into account in public-housing projects. They have become normal sights. But public agencies and social workers know that these areas are foci of disease. On the tuberculosis maps the black dots are heaviest in the Mexican colony.

Education. The educational problems of the Mexican minority are of two basic types—the extension of educational opportunities to the young, and the creation of adult education programs adapted to the needs of these communities. So far as the children are concerned, education and child labor are waging, now as in past years, a bitter struggle for the young mind. The tent schools of San Luis Obispo County in California are better than what most counties in that state provide for the children of wandering Mexican pickers. But they are also mute reminders of the inability of local, county, state, and federal authorities to provide

these young American citizens with decent facilities for learning.

The adolescent and college-age Mexicans today represent a reservoir of possibilities for leadership that has not been recognized. Hundreds of young men and women who have somehow survived the attrition of the crops and the economic pressure on the home and have finished high school can go no further. They represent what the American way of life can do at its best, even against the underlying resistance of finance farming, the international traffic in low living standards, and the other complexities of the boss culture.

Civil liberties. The degree of enjoyment of civil liberties and constitutional rights varies with the nature of sub-groups within the Mexican minority. Lowest in the scale are the wetbacks, the illegals, for whom there are no rights. Next come the Nationals, whose rights are defined by contract and occasionally enforced by a weak bureaucracy of United States and Mexican officials. Then there are the long-resident Mexicans who have never become citizens. They are reluctant to demand protection or to insist on their constitutional prerogatives because their status, too, is vulnerable.

The Mexicans have probably not missed any of the forms of mistreatment and violation of civil liberties that have been visited on the other minority groups in American life. Thus far, however, they have failed to develop strong institutional resistance to such invasions.

Community relations. The relationship between the Mexican minority and the dominant elements has generally been a punitive-inquisitorial one on the part of the latter. It is interesting to note how the Mexicans shrink from contact with even those agencies of the dominant group that are intended to "do good."

PROGRAM FOR ACTION

These agencies too often approach the Mexican client with a questionnaire in hand. Being questioned, for the Mexican worker, has too often been but the first step toward being arrested. Hence the reluctance of the Mexicans to ask for relief, to apply for medical assistance, or to have any truck with the formidable apparatus of any federal agency. The machinery of government, to the Mexican,



has been something to avoid. It must be met only when it comes at one aggressively in the war dress of a cop. What lies across the railroad tracks can be left well enough alone.

But the dominant community is there. And so is the Mexican *colonia*. What adjustment there is has been worked out by the contractors on the economic level, by the survival of patriotic and cultural traditions that have worn thin, and by a silent skepticism toward the questionnaire-state that lies across the tracks and runs the show.

Rural and urban relations. Many important Mexican communities lie in the heart of metropolitan areas. In Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Antonio they have often been engulfed, sometimes bulldozed out of old quarters to make way

for swank subdivisions or modern highways. Mexican centers of this type play a multiple role. They are winter havens for the migrant workers that criss-cross the land in spring and summer. They provide a stepping-stone from farm to industrial employment. They bring the young people into closer and more intense contact with the dominant culture. Here the rural attitude dissolves into an urban resentment and a mental confusion created by the economic and social conditions which face all city workers. One result, for the Mexicans, has been the separation of the urban from the rural groups, so that the full force of the Mexican community has never been brought to bear on the problems they have in common. The urban Mexican has never reached, as has the urban Negro, toward the rural Mexican so that both could improve their status. This gap is one that has not been sufficiently noticed by Mexicans themselves or by non-Mexicans who have attempted to work with the group.

Political impotence. From what has been said, it is not surprising to find that the Mexicans are a political nonentity in the United States. Though many thousands of them are citizens by birth or naturalization, they keep clear of political obligations and therefore do not take advantage of political opportunities. There are counties in the Southwest where the Mexicans could theoretically swing the results of an election if they registered and voted. But too often they do not. This in turn means that state and federal legislation rarely takes them into account. Even in municipal affairs it is uncommon to find spokesmen for the Mexican. Therefore all pleas to the state governor, the President of the United States, the legislature, or Congress must be based on considerations of high human sentiment. In the American political system,

COMMON GROUND

however, such sentiments have always been found to fare much better when supported by precinct organization and votes in the ballot box.

Trade-union organization. Perhaps the most serious weakness, and by no means the least important of the problems of the Mexicans in the United States, is their lack of economic organization.

The Mexican workers, both in industry and agriculture, have given sufficient proof of their understanding of solidarity among workers. They have shown that they can take every form of violence which vigilantism in this country has been able to devise. Mexican workers in Imperial, Salinas, and Orange have sustained industrial disputes single-handed against the combined police, political, and propaganda resources of finance-farming and corporation ranching. But as yet they have not solved the problem of union organization. The attempt to set up separate unions on racial lines has been disastrous. There is a language barrier. The labor movement itself until recently has taken a somewhat benevolent interest rather than an active organizational concern in Mexican workers.

In the field of agriculture, there are still other difficulties. There is the myth that farm workers are unorganizable and Mexican farm workers twice so. Farm wages are so low that the monthly union dues seem a heavy tax on the workers. There are long periods of unemployment when union obligations can be met only at considerable sacrifice. A trade-union of farm workers must face and meet assaults on its security ranging from local irritation, through state legislative attacks, and up to international maneuvers to swamp local living and working standards.

Nevertheless, the problem of union organization must be solved. The economic education of the Mexican worker is much more advanced than his cultural

assimilation or his political experience. The union is his most vital point of contact with the larger community.

III

Here, broadly speaking, is the situation. Left to themselves, the Mexicans in the United States will undoubtedly continue to devise their own defenses against pressures of the kind I have described.

But what distinguishes the present moment is the growing feeling, in and out of the Mexican group, that future adjustment does not have to be left to laissez-faire, that it can be accomplished much more intelligently through widespread information about the group among Americans generally, through mutual counsel, planning, and concerted democratic action on the part of all those concerned with bringing all elements of the American population into participating partnership in American life.

To help give some direction to that feeling, or at least to outline an agenda for discussion, I offer the following suggestions:

The postwar economic relations of the United States with Mexico must be examined to determine whether they have strengthened or weakened the possibilities for democratic control of the human and natural resources of that country. The signs of the last ten years all too plainly point to the taming of the Mexican Revolution and the shelving of its fundamental economic reforms which so displeased and alarmed foreign corporate interests. Until Mexico can offer a far larger degree of economic security to its people, thousands of them will seek relief by migrating over the border, legally or illegally. Thus it becomes of primary importance to determine whether the economic policy of the United States is fostering or hampering the chances for creating a

PROGRAM FOR ACTION

Mexico able to employ, feed, house, clothe, and educate its workers on a rising standard of living. To ignore this basic premise is to overlook the roots of the problem.

It must be established as public policy in this country that no agreements for the recruitment of workers in Mexico for employment in the United States are to be made without participation by the legitimate representatives of the trade-unions representing the workers. Specifically, this means that notice should be

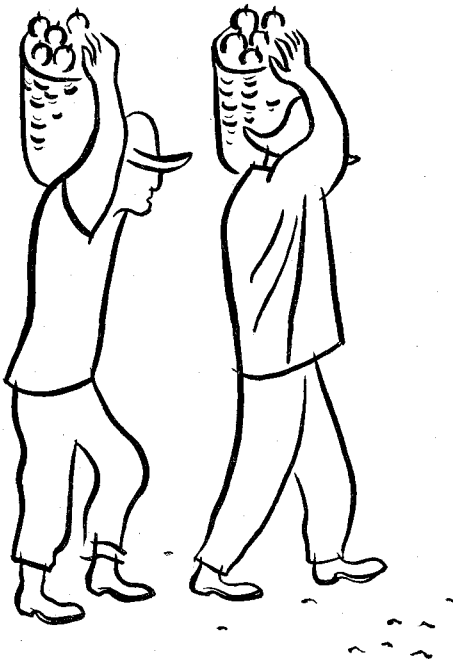
quate safeguards for the maintenance of living and working standards, the enforcement of the individual work contracts, and the protection of the organizational and collective bargaining rights of both the Mexican and United States workers affected.

The United States immigration law should be amended to make it a felony to transport, harbor, conceal, or employ an alien who is in this country illegally. When such aliens are picked up for deportation, their earned wages should be paid by the employer before they are returned home. The burden of responsibility should be placed by law where it belongs—on those who profit from the poverty and need that drives the wet-backs into illegal exile.

Likewise the authority of the Attorney General of the United States to admit or exclude certain types of labor under present legislation should be revised. At the present time this authority is the only legal ground on which the present drive of corporation farmers in California to beat down agricultural wages can be even remotely justified. It is a discretionary power which, because it affects vitally the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, should be brought within the immediate influence of public opinion and the frequent review of the legislative branch of the national government.

FEPC legislation, federal and state, should be fostered and specific efforts made to bring the Mexican minority within its purview. This should include much more attention to job discrimination against this particular group of the nation than has heretofore been given.

Legislative action and court action against rank practices of discrimination should continue. The recent successes achieved with regard to the elimination of double-standard education point the way. Many discriminatory practices



served on the Department of State, the United States Employment Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Agriculture that the time for confidential one-sided negotiations, based on proposals representing the views of finance-farming only, is over. In their place there should be tri-partite negotiations with full public hearings and ade-

COMMON GROUND

against citizens of Mexican ancestry can and will yield to legislative remedies.

Federal agencies, especially the Department of Justice, can be better equipped to deal with violations of civil liberties involving Mexicans than they are at present. Trained Mexican American citizens are available for positions in these agencies to see to it that the Mexican minority is fully advised of its rights under law and to provide the legal means for assuring the enjoyment of those rights. Particular attention should be given in these agencies to the postwar experience of ex-servicemen of Mexican ancestry in relation to employment, government assistance, and other services to which the *GI* is entitled, irrespective of color or race.

The drive in Congress to include agricultural workers in the federal minimum wage law should be sustained. Such inclusion would immediately put a floor under the feet and a roof over the heads of thousands of Mexican families who work on the land.

Similarly the effort to include farm workers in the social-security system should be carried to a successful conclusion.

The facts on housing in the Mexican colonies should be laid before federal and state housing agencies and legal provision made for the correction of this blight.

Federal and state agencies likewise should work out, and legislative bodies approve, joint programs for the protection of the educational rights of the children of migrant farm workers.

State employment bureaus should be re-examined and administrative changes made to bring these public agencies as much in line with the needs of the farm workers as they are now in line with the interests of corporation farming.

Legislative action should also be mapped looking to the more stringent

regulation of contractors who exploit the workers on the side.

An analysis should be made by competent persons of the relationship of social-welfare and public-service agencies with the Mexican minority group. This analysis should work from within the group outward, rather than from outside the group toward it. Its purpose would be to isolate and overcome the barriers that stand between the various community services and facilities that exist today and the Mexican group.

Service scholarships should be created, from public funds or otherwise, for the further training of promising young men and women of Mexican ancestry in the various branches of public welfare.

Above all, union organization must go on until it has brought the Mexican workers fully into the stream of the American labor movement.

To develop the details of such a broad program, and to keep it under constant adjustment to the needs of the Mexican minority, new functions should be given existing agencies and certain new agencies created:

The Pan American Union should be given research and administrative functions with regard to the negotiation of inter-American labor agreements, which should be withdrawn from the internal politics of governments participating in them. If a major reform in the Organization of American States is required to accomplish this, let such a reform come. It is long overdue.

Trade-union organization programs should extend beyond immediate economic aims to those dealing with the elimination of maladjustments between the Mexican minority and the larger community.

A Federal Advisory Council on Human

PROGRAM FOR ACTION

and Civil Rights should be created with representation of the Mexican group. This council should have adequate informational facilities and should primarily concern itself with inclusive research on the major problems that affect the conditions of life and work of the minority groups.

State committees on human relations should be created where they do not already exist.

If they can be financed, there should be a series of conferences on the problems of Mexican Americans held during the next year in the three areas centering around Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Antonio, in which experienced leaders from the Mexican communities as well as representatives from other minority groups and private and public organizations working actively in the field of human relations and civil rights should come together to exchange information and extend mutual support and discuss specifically the organization of Mexican Americans for improvement of their status.

The matter of a national organization of or for Mexican Americans is not a simple one. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Japanese American Citizens League come immediately to mind. But the example of the NAACP in the fight for Negro rights is not wholly applicable, for Negroes in America have had the advantage of a cultural base which the Mexicans who have migrated here do not have. While for the most part they have been kept outside the main American cultural milieu, Mexicans in this country have undergone considerable cultural dilution—language, values, music, press, education—which is everywhere to be seen. This dilution is not altogether deplorable; it represents, in my view, an opportunity to move into synthesis with

the rest of the American culture eventually. Again, there is the important problem of language. The higher one goes toward national organization, the greater the preference of Mexican Americans to express themselves in English and to use symbols that mean something only to English-speaking people. Reverse the direction and one finds the more intense symbolism and greater use of Spanish at the grass roots. This weakens both the organizational strength and the emotional strands upon which organization depends.

There should probably be a national body whose main concern is the Mexican American minority, but I am convinced it cannot be created by adopting ready-made patterns. I think it possible that joint committees of Mexican Americans and other minority groups can be organized locally for co-operation on issues which affect any or all members of those minorities. Perhaps such groups should decide whether the Mexican element should then set up separate local organizations to take advantage of strong minority consciousness where it exists, and then whether the Mexican Americans should move on separately toward a national organization of their own.

Whatever the decision on whether or not to push for a national organization, I am convinced of two things. One is the necessity for trade-union organization. Nothing that is done must interfere with this; everything that is done must stimulate and encourage the Mexican Americans to organize for their economic defense. This is the only way a self-sustaining base for a broad program on the whole front of the problems which face them can be created. Second, the international aspects of the matter can and should be used much more forcibly and persistently than in the past. By this I mean that the individuals and organiza-

tions who are violating every tenet of the Good Neighbor policy in the flesh and spirit of the Mexicans of the borderlands should be openly challenged and called to account. Here, I feel, is one important channel for the non-Mexicans to enter realistically the area of democratic international relations.

Ernesto Galarza was born in Mexico in 1905. The revolution of 1911 forced his family to emigrate to the United States. He attended elementary school in California and was graduated from Sacramento High School in 1923. From 1914 to 1927 he worked summers as migratory farm laborer, cannery hand, water boy on

railway maintenance, messenger boy, interpreter, cook's assistant, and tutor. He attended Occidental College from 1923 to 1927, doing part-time social work in the Mexican communities of Southern California. After a year of research in Mexico, he received his M.A. from Stanford University, and later his Ph.D. from Columbia. In 1930 he was research assistant on Latin American affairs for the Foreign Policy Association, and from 1936 to 1946 he served in the Pan American Union, first as assistant in education and, from 1940 on, as Chief of the Division of Labor and Social Information. He is now Director of Research and Education for the National Farm Labor Union, AFL.

AS LONG AS THE GRASS SHALL GROW

CARLOS BULOSAN

IN THE middle of that year when we were picking peas on the hillside, I noticed the school children playing with their teacher in the sun. It was my first time to see her, a young woman of about twenty-five, with brown hair and a white dress spotted with blue. The blue sky seemed to absorb the white color of her dress, but from where I stood she appeared all clothed with light blue. The blueness of the sea at the back of the schoolhouse also enhanced the blue dots of her dress. But my eyes were familiar with the bright colors on the hillside, the yellowing leaves of the peas, the sprouting green blades of the summer grass, the royal white crowns of the eidelweiss, the tall gray mountains in the distance, and the silent blue sea below the clear sky.

I had arrived in America, the new land,

three months before and had come to this farming town to join friends who had years ago left the Philippines. I had come in time to pick the summer peas. I had been working for over a month now with a crew of other Filipino immigrants who followed the crops and the seasons. At night when our work was done and we had all eaten and scrubbed the dirt off our bodies, I joined them in my dress suit and went to town to shoot pool at a familiar place. I observed that the older men went to the back of the poolroom and played cards all night long. In the morning they went to the field sleepily and talked about their losses and winnings all day. They seemed a bunch of contented workers, but they were actually restless and had no plans for the future.

Then I saw the children. They re-

mind me of a vanished time. I used to stop at my work and watch them singing and running and screaming in the sun. One dark-haired boy in particular, about eight, brought back acute memories of a childhood friend who died a violent death when I was ten. We had gone to the fields across the river that afternoon to fly our kites because it was summertime and the breeze was just strong enough to carry them to high altitudes. Suddenly, in the midst of our sport, a ferocious carabao broke loose from its peg and came plunging wildly after us, trapping my friend and goring him to death. That night when I went to see him, and realized that he was truly dead, I ran out of the house and hid in the back yard where the moonlight was like a silver column in the guava trees. I stood sobbing under a guava, smelling the sweetness of the papaya blossoms in the air. Then suddenly nightingales burst into a glorious song. I stopped crying and listened. Gradually I became vaguely comforted and could accept the fact that my friend would not come back to life again. I gathered an armful of papaya blossoms and went back into the house and spread them over the coffin. I returned to the guava grove and listened to the nightingales sing all night long.

So now this dark-haired boy in a land far away, many years afterward, stirred a curiosity for the unknown that had been dimmed in me by time. I walked to the schoolhouse one morning and stood by the fence. The children ran to me, as if they knew me. I cannot now remember my exact feeling when they reached out their little hands to me. But I know that I suddenly started gathering the red and yellow poppies growing abundantly on the hillside. Then the teacher came out on the porch and called the children back to their classes.

I returned to my work, watching the

schoolhouse. In the early afternoon when the children had gone home, I saw the teacher walking toward the hill. She came to me.

"Were you the boy that was at the schoolhouse this morning?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am," I said.

"How old are you?"

I told her. She looked toward my companions for a moment, who had all stopped working to listen to her. There was something important she wanted to say, but she waited for a moment, deciding silently and intelligently.

"You are too young to be working," she said finally. "How far have you gone in school?"

I was ashamed to admit it, but I said: "Third grade, ma'am."

"Would you like to do some reading with me?"

"I'd love to, ma'am," I said softly. I looked at my companions from the corners of my eyes, because they would ridicule me if they knew I wanted some education. I never saw any reading material at our bunkhouse except the pictures of semi-nude women in movie magazines. "I'd love to study some, ma'am," I said. "But I can read only a few words."

"Well, I'll teach you," she said. "What time do you go home?"

"Six o'clock, ma'am," I said.

She said, "I'll be at your bunkhouse at eight. That will give you two hours for dinner and a bath. Tell your friends to be ready, too."

"Yes, ma'am," I said. "I will tell them. Some of them went to high school in the Islands, but most of us stopped in the primary grades."

"I'll teach those who are willing," she said. "So be ready at eight sharp."

I watched her walk slowly down the hill. When she reached the highway at the foot of the hill, I waved my hand at her. She waved back and walked on. She

drove away in her car, and when she was gone, I went on working quietly. But my companions taunted me. Some of them implied dark things that made me stop picking peas, but I did not understand then. When they finally stopped shouting at me, I resumed my work thinking of books I would like to read.

The teacher came at the appointed time. She had put on a pair of corduroy pants and an unironed blue shirt. It was my first time to see a woman dressed like a man. I stole glances at her every time she turned her face away. She brought a story book about ancient times which she read slowly to me. But I was disappointed because my companions did not want to study with me. I noticed that five stayed home and played poker; the others went to town to shoot pool. There was one in the kitchen who kept playing his guitar, stopping only now and then to listen to what we were reading. About ten o'clock in the evening the teacher closed the book and prepared to go. I took her to the door and looked outside where the moon was shining brightly. The grass on the hill was beautiful, and the calm sea farther away was like a polished mirror, and the tall mountains on the horizon were like castles.

"Shall I walk you to the road, ma'am?" I asked.

"Thank you," she said. "I love to walk in the moonlight."

When she was at the gate, I ran after her.

"What is your name, ma'am?" I asked.

"Helen O'Reilly," she said. "Good night."

I watched her walk away. She stopped under the tall eucalyptus trees on the highway and looked around the wide silence. After a while she lighted a cigarette and climbed into her car.

Miss O'Reilly came to our bunkhouse

every evening after that night. She read stories of long ago, and pages from the history of many nations. My companions slowly joined our course and in two weeks only three of the whole crew stayed away. She took a great interest in her work. After a while she started talking about herself and the town she had come from and about her people. She had been born in a little town somewhere in the Northwest. She had come from a poor family and supported herself through college. Before she was graduated the depression came. When she was offered a teaching job in a rural community in California, she accepted it, thinking that she could go on with her studies when she had saved enough money.

Miss O'Reilly was a good teacher. We started giving her peas and flowers that we picked on the hillside when we were working. Once we thought of buying her a dress, but one of the older men said that it was improper. So we put the money in a large envelope and gave it to her when she came one evening. She did not want to accept it, but we said that it was a token of our gratitude. She took it then, and when she came again she showed us a gabardine suit that she had bought with it.

We were all very happy after that. On the hillside, when we were picking peas, we sometimes stopped and considered the possibility of giving her a party at our bunkhouse. But one evening she came to tell us that some organization in town had questioned her coming to our bunkhouse. She told us to go to the schoolhouse when our work was done and study there like regular pupils.

I could not understand why any organization would forbid her to work where she pleased. I was too new from the Islands, too sheltered within my group of fellow Filipinos to have learned the taboos of the mainland, to have seen the Ameri-

can doors shut against us. But I went to the schoolhouse every night with my companions and started writing short sentences on the blackboard. I stood there and looked out of the window. I saw the silent sea and the wide clear sky. Suddenly I wrote a poem about what I saw outside in the night. Miss O'Reilly started laughing because my lines were all wrong and many of the words were misspelled and incorrectly used.

"Now, now," Miss O'Reilly said behind my back, "it's too soon for you to write poetry. We will come to that later."

I blushed.

"What made you do it?" she asked.

"I don't know, Miss O'Reilly," I said.

"Did you ever read poetry before?"

"No, Miss O'Reilly," I said. "I didn't even know it was poetry."

She looked at me with some doubt. Then she went to her table and started reading from the Bible. It was the Song of Solomon. I liked the rich language, the beautiful imagery, and the depth of the old man's passion for the girl in the vineyard.

"This is the best poetry in the world," Miss O'Reilly said when she finished the chapter. "I would like you to remember it. There was a time when men loved deeply and were not afraid to love."

I was touched by the songs. I thought of the pea vines on the hillside and the silent blue sea not far away. And I said to myself: *Some day I will come back in memory to this place and time and write about you, Miss O'Reilly. How gratifying it will be to come back to you with a book in my hands about all that we are feeling here tonight!*

Miss O'Reilly shoved the Bible into my pocket that night. I read it over and over. I read all the school books also. I was beginning to think that when I could save enough money I would live in another town and go to school. We still

had the peas to pick and after that the tomatoes on the other side of the hill.

Then it was that Miss O'Reilly told us she was forbidden by the school board to use the building at night. The directive was for us, of course. Miss O'Reilly did not tell us that, but some of my companions knew what it was all about. When she invited us to go to her boarding house, only a few of us went.

"Come one by one in the dark," she advised. "And go up the steps very quietly."

"All right, Miss O'Reilly," I said.

So we went to her room at night where we read softly. She told us that there was a sick old woman in the house. One night a man knocked on the door and asked Miss O'Reilly to step out in the hallway for a moment. When Miss O'Reilly came back to the room, I saw that she was perturbed. She looked at us in a maternal way and then toward the hallway with a forgiving look. We resumed our reading, and at our departure Miss O'Reilly told us not to mind anything.

I went again the following night. But I was alone. My companions had dropped out. Miss O'Reilly seemed about to tell me something, but she let it drop. I forgot about her uneasiness as we read to each other, but when I left and she accompanied me to the door, she turned suddenly and ran back to her room. I thought she had forgotten to give me something, but when her lights went out I went on my way.

I had gone two blocks when four men approached me in the dark street. Two of them grabbed me and pushed me into a car. Then they drove for several blocks, turned to a field of carrots, and stopped under a high water tank. They got out of the car then and started beating me.

I tried to defend myself, but they were

COMMON GROUND

too many. When I had a chance, I started to run away, but a man jumped into the car and drove after me. I fell down when the car struck me. They all came and started beating me again. I could fight no more. I lay on my stomach and rolled when they kicked me. Once, when I was losing consciousness, I felt the hard heel of a shoe on the back of my head. Then everything plunged into darkness.

When I regained my senses, it was past midnight. The sky was clear as day. I did not know where I was for a moment. I saw the full moon hanging languidly far away. I opened my swollen eyes a little and the golden lights of several stars appeared in the depths of the sky. Slowly I realized what had happened. And then, when I understood it all, tears rolled down my cheeks and fell on the cool carrot leaves underneath my head.

It was the final warning. When I reached our bunkhouse, my companions were crowded into the kitchen reading a roughly written message that had been thrown into the place that night. The men who had beaten me had driven to our bunkhouse when they were through with me. The message stated they would burn our bunkhouse and drive us out of town if we saw the schoolteacher again.

One of the older men, who had known darker times in this land, took me by the arm and secreted me in the outer house, saying, "I could have told you these things before, but I saw that you were truly interested in educating yourself. I admired your courage and ambition. May I shake your hand?"

I said, taking his hand, "Thank you."

"Some men are good, but others are bad," he said again. "But all evil is not confined in one race of people, nor all goodness in another. There is evil in every race, but there is also good in every

other. And yet all goodness belongs to the whole human race."

Then I knew why Miss O'Reilly had come to our bunkhouse and taught us. But I did not go to her boarding house for a week. I was afraid. When my bruises were well enough, I went to town, but Miss O'Reilly's room was closed and dark. I thought she had gone to a movie; I waited almost all night.

But she did not appear that night. Nor any other night. Then I knew that she had moved to another house, because during the day I saw her in the schoolyard. Sometimes she stopped and waved her hand toward us. I waved mine, too. And that went on for days. Then she disappeared.

I often wondered what had happened to her. Another teacher took her place. But the new teacher did not even notice us. So at night and on our days off we went to town in separate groups looking for our teacher. But we did not find her. We finished picking the peas and transferred to the other side of the hill to harvest the tomatoes. Now and then we stopped to look toward the schoolhouse, but Miss O'Reilly did not come back. Then one day in June the schoolhouse closed its door and we watched the children slowly walk home. It was the end of another school year, but it was still only the beginning of my first year in the new land.

One day, toward the end of the tomato season, Miss O'Reilly appeared. She looked a little thinner. I noticed a scar on her left wrist.

"I was in the hospital for a while," she greeted us. "I have been ill."

"You should have let us know," I said. "We would have sent you flowers from the hill."

"That is nice of you," she said. "But now I am leaving. To the big city."

AS LONG AS THE GRASS SHALL GROW

"Will you come back some day, Miss O'Reilly?" I asked.

"I hope so," she said. "But when you come to the big city, try to look for me. I think I'll be there for a long time."

"Are you going to teach in another school?"

"I don't know," she said. "But I will try to find an assignment. Yes, there must be a vacancy somewhere." And then, kindly, she put her hand on my head, saying, "I will go on teaching people like you as long as the grass shall grow."

It was like a song. I did not know then what she meant, but the words followed me down the years. That night we gave Miss O'Reilly a party at our bunkhouse. We roasted a pig in the open air. The men tuned up their musical instruments and played all night long. The moon was up in the sky and the sea was silent as ever. The tall mountains were still there; above them stars were shedding light to the world below. The grass on the hill was beginning to catch the morning dew. And then we took Miss O'Reilly to her car and bade her good-bye.

I wanted to cry. Tenderly she put her hand on my head.

"Remember," she said, "when you come to the city, try to look for me. And now, good night to all."

And she drove away. I never saw her again.

I went away from that town not long afterward and worked in many big cities. I would work for a long time in one place, but when the leaves of the trees started to fall, I would pack my suitcase and go to another city. And the years passed swiftly.

One morning I found I had been away from home for twenty years. I saw the grass of another spring growing on the hills and in the fields. And the comforting thought came to me that I had had Miss O'Reilly with me all the time, there in the broad fields and verdant hills of my new home, my America.

Carlos Bulosan came to the United States in 1931 after one year of high-school education in the Philippines. He was active in the trade-union movement all through the '30's, and during the war he worked with the OWI and Naval Intelligence. His prose and poetry have appeared in a wide variety of periodicals, and his books include Letter From America, Voice From Bataan, The Laughter of My Father, and America Is in the Heart.

THE CENTURY OF THE DISCOMMONED MAN

PAUL MEADOWS

DURING the early days of the recent war, Mr. Henry Wallace, then Vice-President, in an address before the Free World Association hopefully cited evidence that this is "the century of the common man."

It is at least a common phrase, and there is a sufficient social reality to give substance to what might be a shadowy term. Wallace himself pointed out that: "Everywhere the common people are on the march. Thousands of them are learning to read and write, learning to think together, learning to use tools." This would be a remarkable achievement for any century, particularly when coupled with the magnificent strides in medical technology and nutrition, the rising standards of living, mass movements, and social legislation.

The trouble is that the phrase, "century of the common man," does not tell the full story, nor is it accurate reporting. The century is almost half gone, and the millions of common people who have been killed in war and by its aftermath can hardly claim the century to be their own. Nor do the movements in the name of the common man always turn out so very well for all of the common people, least of all for those who prefer to be different. Again, the phrase, as popularly used, suggests a leveling process, inferentially making it a sin to be uncommon. But most significantly of all, the phrase fails to make clear that some of the elements of social justice which Mr. Wallace proclaimed to be spreading

globally are fully as important to the wealthy as to the poor, to the extraordinary as to the ordinary, to the great as to the small. For instance, a wealthy Negro or Jew is just as deeply hurt by vicious minority discriminations as a poor one. In other words, the phrase "common man" is hackneyed and glib, and it suffers from a politically re-enforced obsolescence of meaning.

If, then, the 20th century is to be anybody's century, let it belong to "the discommoned man"!

This latter phrase has the advantage of novelty, for it has long since passed out of general circulation. In medieval and early modern England "to discommon" a man meant to exclude or banish him from a community of interest; specifically, to deprive him of citizenship or of church fellowship. In the days of the enclosure movements it meant depriving him of the right of commons, as of pasture. This latter usage was not unknown in the history of the rangelands of the American West, where the barbed-wire fence and the "farmer" discommoned the cattlemen, thereby precipitating many a deadly feud, celebrated now by Hollywood and the Lone Ranger. The dictionary meaning of the term is clear enough: the discommoned man is one who has been shut off from the common life by forces and actions usually not his own.

The 20th century, if we may judge from the many signs set up across the

THE CENTURY OF THE DISCOMMONED MAN

social landscape by the increasing number of social services and social protest movements, has rediscovered the discommoned man. Indeed the center of the collective conscience of our day turns on the insistent demand that the factors and actions which discommon human beings must be removed. For example, the sentiment behind "March of Dimes" campaigns and anti-racism holds that human beings must not be categorically excluded from participation in the rituals of their common life.

For the discommoned man is an isolated man, and the routines of his social living have been ruptured by agencies and behaviors over which he has no authority and from which come denial and deprivation of his full humanity. The human being, like any other animal, realizes his nature through action: in his case, through social action. The social act is the supremely humanizing and self-fulfilling act. Social participation is the law of his life. Isolation is its negation.

Oftentimes human beings are discommoned by physical circumstances. A flood, a famine, a blizzard, a drought, an earthquake: geographic calamities which sweep across the face of the earth and leave in their path huge scars of misery and privation: these physical forces create giant ruptures in the rituals of collective living and set in motion collective responsibilities. Disaster relief, river-valley planning, conservation technology bind up the wounds of discommoned families and enable them to walk again.

Sometimes human beings are discommoned by biological factors and experiences. The onslaughts of disease, the handicaps of physiological impairment, the disorganization of the nervous system, deficient mental endowment, the functional failures of old age, all take part in the isolation and nullification of the human personality. Mobilized against

them there has developed in industrial cultures a rather complex, very impressive, and increasingly adequate program of research, medical care, public health, institutional services, and welfare agencies. Thereby social organization seeks to provide the answer to human disorganization.

Sometimes human beings are discommoned by economic conditions—poverty, unemployment, cyclical starts and stops—which deny the individual's command over the commodities and services of a money-mediated economy. To his rescue has come a large set of mass measures which are embodied in such activities as public works, work relief, unemployment compensation, organization of the labor market, training programs, planned resource development à la TVA, trade unionism, labor legislation, and redistribution of the national income. Security through social action is intended to be the answer to the human insecurities of a market economy.

Sometimes human beings are discommoned by political circumstances which deny their integrity as members of organized society. These circumstances strike at the appreciation and expression of civil rights. "To secure these rights," as the title of the famed President's Committee report suggests, a long line of legislative enactments, court decisions, and social protest movements has evolved, which attempts to weave a cloak of legal immunity against irresponsible group attacks. The feeling which lies behind these efforts is simply that to invade with impunity the rights of membership in an organized society means the destruction of the structure of a civil society. In protecting discommoned individuals and groups the society protects itself.

Finally, human beings are sometimes discommoned by manipulated motives and agitated attitudes which block their

COMMON GROUND

being and thwart their lives: anti-Semitism, Nordicism, white supremacy, riches oblige, un-Americanism, hundred percentism, nationalisms, ethnicisms. These planes and currents of sadistic parochialism, these dead-ends in the pattern of the whole community, these invidious ghettos of social living have been slowly recognized for what they are: collective prejudgments which punish both the judge and the adjudged. Unfortunately, though they are emotional diseases which sicken the whole society, a cultural psychiatry which would cope with them is as yet an embryonic stirring.

The discovery and care of the discommoded man are literally the work of a society, which, as Lawrence K. Frank has put it, must regard itself as the patient. For the discommoded man is a product of the discommoding society.

The recognition of this fact, and the shock of this recognition, lies behind the slow emergence of the social-service state in our day. From community centers to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, from child welfare services to the Food and Agricultural Organization, the search of the modern state system, whatever its shortcomings, is directed toward the removal of those thwarts to individuality which transcend the individual in cause and control.

To be sure, one needs no severe stric-

tures by political scientists and theologians to realize that such a widespread undertaking is a tightrope walk between personal liberty and collective authority. Indeed the administrative revolution of the liberal state is dangerously poised between the passivity of the former and the activity of the latter, between the individualism of the one and the collectivism of the other. Unhappily, there is no certain formula for the emerging *étatisme* of modern life. There is only an orientation, a direction: the belief that the human being is free only when he has the power to act.

For freedom is the power of the human being to realize the imperatives of his nature in an organized society: in this sense, and in this sense only, are all men epitomized in the idea of the common man. To lose this freedom is to be discommoded. To maintain this freedom is the real task of this "century"—or of any century—"of the common man."

Paul Meadows is associate professor of sociology at the University of Nebraska. A member earlier of the faculties of Northwestern and Montana State University, his major interests are industrial sociology, race relations, and general social problems. His writings in these fields have appeared in a wide variety of sociological and other journals.

PINCE-NEZ AND CALICO

MIKHAIL JELEZNOV

WITHIN a very short time after my arrival in this country in the mid-'20s I was faced with the perennial dilemma of all newcomers: that of finding a job and earning a livelihood. As a Russian I could count on certain privileges. I had a somewhat wider choice of professions than the average immigrant, although still within the range of occupations and pursuits that did not entail knowledge of the English language.

To begin with, I considered myself not an immigrant but an *émigré*. It made quite a difference; it meant that I was a Russian gentleman whose estates and holdings (which I never possessed) had been confiscated by a hostile regime. It also meant that I always had to follow the "noblesse oblige" formula: carry a cane, wear pince-nez, smoke my cigarettes through a long ivory cigarette holder, and speak unintelligible English with a never changing unintelligible Russian accent.

There were about half a dozen occupations open to a Russian *émigré* who knew no English. I could become a professor of Russian literature in a small midwestern college; a house-painter or paper hanger; a lecturer on Russian affairs before English-speaking clubs or organizations; a doorman or a waiter in a Russian restaurant; a famous singer of Gypsy songs; and, finally, a Count or a Prince.

For me personally there were certain limitations. I could not become a famous Gypsy singer: I have no ear for music

and cannot carry a tune. Famous Gypsy singers, I understand, do not consider this a handicap if they possess a deep throaty voice. Unfortunately I lacked even that. The only times I sounded like a famous Gypsy singer were when I had a cold, but these occasions were too rare to warrant a permanent career.

I mailed out letters to various institutions of higher learning offering my services as an authority on Russian civilization, literature, history, art, and ballet. In the accompanying biographical sketch I presented a lengthy list of distinguished accomplishments in many fields of endeavor. In order to impress the college authorities with my truly Russian background, I signed all the letters "Dr. Misha Jeleznov," for I was given to understand by older and already experienced *émigrés* that Americans recognize as Russians only people whose names are Misha, Sasha, or Yasha.

In the meantime I managed to get a couple of invitations to lecture before some English-speaking women's clubs, but the experience was a sad one for both the clubs and myself: the members of the clubs did not understand my lectures and I failed to understand their questions.

I began to toy with the idea of becoming a Count, Prince, or Grand Duke and marrying an American heiress, but a friend, Ivan Alexeyevich Blin, whom I had known rather well in the old country, dissuaded me from so disastrous a move.

I met Ivan Alexeyevich Blin acciden-

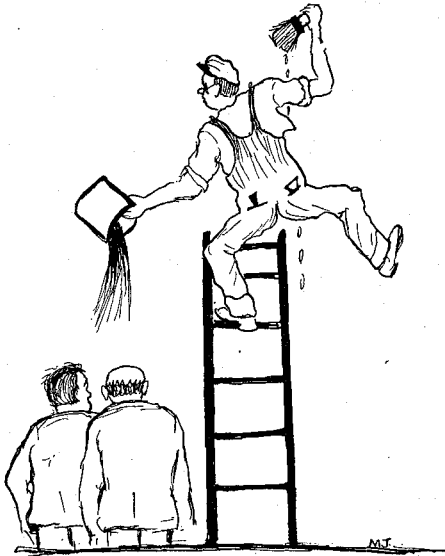
tally in a Russian restaurant in the West Fifties. He carried a cane, wore pince-nez, and smoked through a long ivory cigarette holder. So did I. He was genuinely glad to see me, especially when he became convinced I did not plan to borrow any money from him.

He told me he was no more plain Blin; his name was now de Blinsky, Count de Blinsky. It was perfectly legitimate, even mandatory, for a newcomer in America to change his name. He strongly advised me to do the same. To bear a title, however, was becoming very strenuous. Competition was extremely keen. Russian Counts had to put up with the rivalry of Frenchmen and Britishers who brazenly tried to lure wealthy American girls with their empty titles. It was somewhat better to be a Russian Prince or Grand Duke, but not much. Some American adventurers had the temerity to

think I could bear the ordeal, and suggested that I look for employment elsewhere, perhaps in the line of house painting. He himself was thinking of going back to painting.

In those days quite a number of Russian émigrés were painters or paper hangers. I do not know why; one of the early arrivals must have got a job as a painter and the rest of us followed suit. De Blinsky gave me an address of a boss painter for whom he used to work before he became a titled nobleman. The boss painter told me he did not need any help but was willing to hire me as an apprentice at \$20 a week. I made a rapid calculation in my mind: twenty dollars—four pairs of shoes, or one suit of clothes, or 150 loaves of bread every week. That was luxury beyond any mortal's reach, and I accepted the offer with alacrity.

It was an unsuccessful experience, however. Even as an apprentice I was not a good painter. The boss invariably deplored the fact that I had more paint on my face and overalls than on the objects I was painting. But I was cheap and willing to work, and he kept me until one unfortunate day when I fell off a ladder and spilled a pail of paint on him and the building contractor who had come to examine the job. He paid me off, deducting \$3 for the paint, \$10 for the ruined suit, and \$5 for the aggravation I had caused him. There were evidently no jobs for me in New York, and I decided to go to Chicago where I had a few relatives.



adopt a Russian accent and pose as Princes or Grand Dukes. "Imagine," exclaimed Count de Blinsky. "Americans!"

The Count vehemently advised me not to become a titled Russian. He did not

My relatives were very glad to see me. Their enthusiasm subsided somewhat after they learned that I had come to Chicago to stay.

I assured them, however, that my sojourn in Chicago was more or less temporary, only until I received my appointment to a professorship. Thereupon they

all set out most energetically to help me find a job. A cousin sent me to see a man he knew who worked at Philipsborn's, one of Chicago's lesser mail-order houses.

The man took me to the manager of the yard-goods department. The manager looked at me and asked: "How long since you are in this country?"

"Eight months," I said.

"Where do you come from?"

"Russia."

"Oh, you are Russian?"

"Yes."

"Well, well," said the manager. "There is plenty of rushin' around here."

"Good," I said. "I speak to them."

The manager of the yard-goods department laughed. Being a very polite person I laughed, too.

"Hey, Jack," cried the manager. "Come here."

A young man appeared from nowhere. "He is a new man," said the manager. "Green. Show him what to do."

"Pleased to meet you," said the young man.

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Heyjack," I replied and, in the most exquisite Russian fashion, bowed, clicked my heels, and firmly shook his hand.

Mr. Heyjack looked at me with the utmost distaste. "Follow me," he said. I obediently followed him. We came to a large desk. Mr. Heyjack handed me a pair of scissors, a yardstick, and a batch of papers.

"These are the orders. Fill them," he said. "When you are through, hand them over to the fellow under the 'Outgoing' sign."

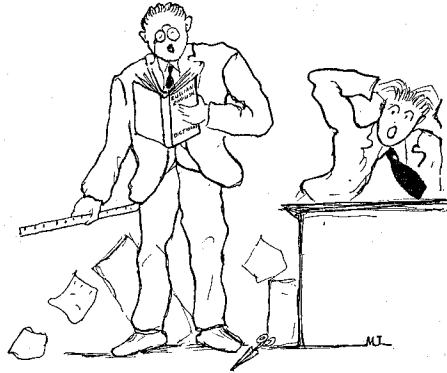
Mr. Heyjack left me. I looked at the scissors, the yardstick, the orders. How does one fill an order? With what? What did he mean? I went to look for Heyjack.

"What did you do in the old country?" he asked indignantly.

"I was a writer," I said proudly. "A poet."

This, strangely enough, did not impress him at all. If anything, it had an opposite effect.

"That's too bad," he said. "Now, look here. Take this order, for instance.



It says: 10 yards of calico. You find the calico. You measure 10 yards. You cut them off with the scissors. You take the 10 yards with the order slip to the fellow under the 'Outgoing' sign. Understand?"

Mr. Heyjack left me again. I looked at the order slip. It did say, "10 yds. calico." "Yds." apparently meant yards. That was simple enough, and it would have been very easy to fill the entire order if I had only known what calico was. But I did not, and I went to look for Heyjack. He showed me where the calico was, and I spent the rest of the day filling calico orders and carefully avoiding all others.

The next day I came to work fortified with an English-Russian dictionary.

"How is everything?" asked the manager.

"O.K.," I said (I had learned that the second day after my arrival).

"Still rushin'?" asked the manager.

"Yes," I replied, "but I expect to get my first papers."

The manager laughed. I laughed, too,

although I could not see what was so funny about expecting first papers.

Mr. Heyjack was hostile. "You did not do so well yesterday," he said. "What was the idea of filling only calico orders? All orders have to be filled. Understand?"

He gave me a new batch of order slips. I took them and went to work. With the aid of the dictionary I was able to fill exactly 11 orders in the first three hours. The manager found me perusing the book.

"What is this?" he demanded.

"English-Russian dictionary," I replied.

"Very interesting," he said.

"Very interesting," I agreed.

"Suppose," said the manager, "you go home for a couple of weeks and study the dictionary and then come back."

"Oh, no," I said. "Don't worry. It is all right. I know now. Gingham, calico, muslin. *Indeyskaya materia, kolenkor, kiseya*. I know."

"You know," said the manager. "That's fine. That's fine. Hey, Jack!"

Mr. Heyjack came running.

"Show the Russian professor out," ordered the manager, and Heyjack showed me out.

There was consternation among my relatives, and a family council was called to discuss my immediate future. After a prolonged and heated debate in which I took no part because it was conducted in English, the cousin who sent me to Philipsborn's suggested I see a man who was a salesman for the *Book of Knowledge*.

The cousin explained that all men and women, Americans and foreigners alike, who had no definite professions, were selling something. If I could interest the Russian colony in the *Book of Knowledge* I would make a small fortune, he said. The proposition sounded alluring, and

I lost no time in contacting the salesman. He turned out to be a dour looking gentleman, drab, misanthropic, with a slight stammer. It was a mystery even to me how he ever succeeded in selling anything to anyone; he never did, I subsequently discovered. But he took me to the sales manager and introduced me as a Russian writer of great fame and influence.

"He is the Russian Eugene O'Neill," said the salesman, and the sales manager expressed his extreme delight at meeting so illustrious a Russian personage. I did not then know who Eugene O'Neill was; neither, I suspect, did the salesman and the sales manager.

After the exchange of preliminary amenities, the sales manager delivered a lengthy harangue on the Art of Selling the *Book of Knowledge*. Most of his lecture, however, due to the exceptional speed with which he spoke, was lost to me. He called it a pep talk, whatever that meant, but some things I finally understood.

The main principle, the sales manager said, was never to get discouraged. Keep Smiling was the motto of every *Book of Knowledge* salesman. The *Book of Knowledge* was a veritable mine of information and should be of tremendous interest to every Russian, man, woman, or child. The company paid a generous commission, and a go-getter could earn as much as \$20 a day. I did not know what a go-getter was. The sales manager gave me a pack of literature and Volume III of the *Book of Knowledge*, wished me good luck, thanked the misanthrope for recommending me, and predicted a bright future for a man of my intelligence and acumen.

I set out on my task with hope and enthusiasm; here was a virgin field practically untrodden by a Russian. I started with Division Street, then the center of the Russian colony, and worked all the

adjoining territory inhabited by my compatriots.

This is not meant to cast aspersions on the good Russian people of Chicago, but they did not want the *Book of Knowledge*, either for themselves or for their children. At least they did not want it from me. Two weeks' door-to-door canvassing brought the following results: the Beef a la Stroganoff I had eaten in one of the restaurants, whose owner I was trying to interest in the *Book of Knowledge*, gave me acute indigestion and confined me to the house for two days; one Russian who refused to buy the book almost succeeded in selling me life insurance; in one house I was called upon to settle a dispute between husband and wife as to the exact date of Lenin's birth; one Russian who was quite willing to buy the *Book of Knowledge* told me such a hard-luck story that I gave him two dollars and the address of my cousin who, it seemed, knew so many important people; one Russian borrowed my sample Volume III and never returned it; and in the final accounting with the sales manager I had to pay the company something like five dollars.

The future of the Russian Eugene O'Neill as a salesman did not look very promising. I was ashamed to tell my relatives about the failure of my latest endeavor and decided to get a job on my own. One morning I found in the *Daily News* the following ad:

"Wanted. Dishwasher. Meals. Apply ready to work. Hotel Sheridan-Plaza."

This, I said to myself, is the job for you, my dear Evgeny (Russian for Eugene). You could not paint, you could not fill orders in a mail-order house, you could not sell the *Book of Knowledge*; perhaps you will be able to wash dishes.

There was no question that the job was made to order for me. I lost no time in getting to the Sheridan-Plaza, a very

fine hotel, indeed. I arrived at the hotel at 10:30 a.m.; they hired me at 11:15 a.m.; and at 12:35 p.m. I was out of a job, a complete and dismal failure.

The foreman of the dishwashers' crew was a red-haired, red-faced Swede. He asked me a few questions of which I understood none. I, in turn, made a few remarks, but the Swede merely shrugged his shoulders. Between the foreman's heavy Swedish accent and my heavy Russian accent our conversation must have weighed a ton. He led me to a machine that I was evidently going to operate and explained its workings in great detail.

"Understand?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied untruthfully.

"Goot, yust be careful," the foreman said and slapped me on the back.

The machine was fascinating. It was a huge contraption for cleaning and polishing silver with an enormous brush going up and down and sideways. One threw in the knives, forks, and spoons at one end, and they all came out sparkingly clean at the other. At least they were supposed to. I had been feeding the machine for some time when it occurred to me that I had better look at what was happening at the opposite end. My horrified eyes beheld a fantastic collection of objects turned and twisted in the most grotesque shapes. There were among them some exquisitely wrought bracelets and rings that would have been the pride of any modern art shop. I quickly stopped the machine and looked around. The foreman was approaching, and I made a dash toward the exit.

"Where you goin'?" the Swede yelled, but I had no time to answer.

A new family council was called, and my relatives again entered into a heated debate about my future. The cousin who knew everybody suggested that I see an

COMMON GROUND

officer of a small neighborhood bank on Division Street.

"They have a number of Russian depositors and may need a Russian-speaking teller," he said. "I will give you a letter of introduction."

The officer was very cordial. He read my cousin's letter and said: "I can use a Russian-speaking clerk. But he must also know English. Do you speak English?"

"Oh, yes," I answered. "Very little. Mainly Russian."

"I am afraid you won't do," the bank officer said.

"I will learn," I said.

"My dear young man," the banker exclaimed. "One goes to school to study the English language, not to a bank!"

I decided to spare my relatives the ordeal of another family conference and informed them I was going back to New York where a person who does not speak any English is held in much greater esteem than a person who does.

This is the third in a series of sketches Mikhail Jeleznov is doing for COMMON GROUND. The two earlier ones were "Shakespeare and I," in the Autumn 1948 issue and "Moscow-on-the-Hudson" in Winter 1949. Mr. Jeleznov is news editor of the New York Russian-language daily, Novoye Russkoye Slovo. He has done his own illustrations.

MEN OF OIL

The great oil industry of America, like the far-flung country itself, brings together in its drilling rigs and refineries workers of all nationalities and races.

THE CHALLENGE OF CITIZENSHIP

DAN W. DODSON

THE RIGHT to differ has been America's most priceless heritage. In a large measure it has been responsible for what creativeness America has shown. Today, when free institutions are being threatened as never before by the march of communism in Europe and Asia, it is worth a moment of self-examination to see what this principle has meant in American citizenship.

The American way has never demanded subscription to any particular dogmas. It has held, rather, that if people were able to hold on to their creative differences and make them a contribution to the whole of American life, the total group would be best served. This process of cultural democracy, as against the melting-pot process, assumes faith enough in people to suppose that, when the right to differ is given, there is enough loyalty to the process to provide a common mortice to hold the society together in times of peril.

We have tested that hypothesis in two world wars and found that it works. Not only was there enough loyalty to the process to hold us together, but it was clearly evident that the very strengths of our society grew out of our differences as well as from our uniformities. From 1820 to 1945, the United States admitted 38,461,395 immigrants. Over four million were from Austria-Hungary, over six million from Germany, nearly five million from Italy, and a quarter million from Japan—nations which were our enemies in the last war. Of this number

(whose offspring of second, third, and fourth generation numbered some thirty to forty million adults at the time of this war), the number who were traitors to their country were so few as to be inconsequential. It is doubtful if they ran as large in proportion as did those from backgrounds other than those above mentioned.

In spite of this profound record, the "100 percenters" among us are not convinced. There are those who would shut off immigration, who predict dire ruin for the country if others are admitted. They still look upon "newcomers" as liabilities. One has to go no further than some of the daily papers to have Puerto Ricans portrayed as dead weight in the cargo of the ship of state. There are some who bemoan the fact that Hitler didn't finish his job at Buchenwald and thereby spare America the Displaced Persons problem. These prophets of doom come from a long, if not a reputable, lineage. In 1797 Representative Otis of Massachusetts told his colleagues that "When the country was new it might have been a good policy to admit all. But it is so no longer." In 1864 a New York City inspector wrote, "The tenants seem to wholly disregard personal cleanliness and the very first principles of decency, their general appearance and actions corresponding with their wretched abodes. This indifference to personal and domiciliary cleanliness is doubtless acquired from a long familiarity with the loathsome surroundings, wholly at variance with all moral or social improve-

COMMON GROUND

ments." The section on which he was reporting was exclusively Irish.

Are there any among us today who would say that America was poorer because the Irish came? If so, he had best not let the Irish hear about it. The group which is castigated changes, but the theme is the same. At a slightly later date, these same Irish were bemoaning the fact that the Italians who were migrating here used the church as a market place and in at least one parish they had them worship in the basement of the church. A policeman was telling recently of the problems he faced as a young rookie in a Bohemian neighborhood, in a slightly later era—loose morals, hard drinking, and lack of integration into the total community. Today it is Puerto Ricans and Mexicans. The population group changes, but the theme of the story is the same.

It sometimes takes faith to see beyond all the personal and social disorganization in which these newcomers are enmeshed, to see the same creative potential in the child of a disease-ridden, illiterate, non-English-speaking, non-skilled person from another cultural milieu as is possessed by one who has the cultural veneer of the dominant group. I will venture, however, that the best investment this country has ever made was not Alaska (as important as that was), not the Louisiana Purchase (as important as that was), but, instead, the millions who came to our shores regardless which country they came from.

It takes freedom from prejudice to see now in the Mexicans, who are nomad-like trekking to and fro in seasonal labor some 3,000,000 strong, the same qualities possessed by the whites who were doing the same thing in the 1930s. It takes a revitalized Americanism on the part of an awful lot of us to see in both groups the same pioneering spirit which dominated the grandsires of those of us who are

from the West, who were discontent with their lot in other places and pushed on out to the frontier. I believe, however, that the parallel is the same.

All were proud people. In all three instances they braved hardships which would have been the despair of peoples of lesser mettle and took the risks to improve their lots. All underwent social disorganization. The desperadoes of the Wild West, the gangs of the 1930s, and the Zoot-Suiters of today were all cut out of a common cloth. All of these groups parted with dear ones who meant as much as life itself, almost, in order to follow the gleam of hope of a better day. All marked the roadsides along which they traveled with the graves of their dead. None despaired. Who can say whose lot was the harder—those who made the early trips, but who received welcomes and cheers as they went along; or those who, because of accident of birth, are denied social approbation and must press relentlessly on in spite of rebuffs, prejudice, and exploitation? And when the annals of history are finally written, who can say who made the greater contribution—those who staked out the empire, or those who "took the gaff" and made us eventually aware of the unfinished business which democracy must address itself to if we are to survive in an atomic age?

We now know enough about people to know that no group has the corner on the market so far as creativity is concerned. What kindles the fires of imagination and sparks creativity is an elusive thing indeed. New England culture flows for a generation and then withers away. These same Irish, characterized so unfavorably a moment ago, have since had a remarkable renaissance of creativity under the leadership of Synge. The Negro population two generations removed from the plantation, laboring under the stereotype of racial inferiority, burst out

with a spurt of creativity in Harlem in the 1920s unexcelled since the New England "flowering." James Weldon Johnson and his brother Rosamond, Ethel Waters, Richard Harrison, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, and numerous others knocked the stereotype about Negro creativity into a cocked hat.

Similarly, Mrs. Simkhovitch, writing about the Lower East Side of the early part of the century, tells of those "little people," immigrants, in their societies for self-improvement, working and studying to make themselves capable of contributing their maximum to American life. Out of these sweatshops, hovels, and patterns of social disorganization came a whole array of names she mentions of persons who wrote their names high on the roster of Gotham's great—Frances Perkins, Jacob Riis, and Irving Berlin being typical examples.

On the other hand, Branch Cabell says that William and Mary College—the self-anointed custodian of culture of the South (culture with a capital C)—in the two hundred and forty-nine years of her existence has "with but one possible exception, no graduate distinguished in any branch of creative art. The thing seems, not extraordinary, but miraculous. It defies all granted laws of probability that the name of at least one fairly known painter, or musician, or sculptor, or poet, or dramatist, should not adorn the long list of thousands of persons who, during two and a half centuries, have been educated, and elaborately educated, at William and Mary." Who is there among us who would dare predict what creative potentialities there may be in any of the various populations which are now considered "problems," if given the right stimulus?

Those of us who are on top of the heap in the dominant group in this culture, enhanced as it is with a mighty

technology, and blessed or damned as only history shall prove with atomic energy, are looking today at those who are different both in our midst and across national boundaries and asking as Nathaniel did of Philip some 2,000 years ago: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Ever and anon some lowly Nazarene comes through in spite of the handicaps and makes us realize that the prejudices and stereotypes about race and nationality which are road blocks to self-realization of individuals of minority groups cause an impoverishment not only to the victims of prejudice, but to the majority as well. Madame Chiang Kai-shek expressed it well during the war: "There is no way to debase innocent human beings without debasing oneself."

For four years, as Executive Director of the Mayor's Committee on Unity of New York, I had the opportunity to survey intergroup relations in that community. I have watched as the United Nations Capital plans have developed and construction started on that edifice on the East Side of mid-town Manhattan. I have often thought of the spiritual resource which should be ours because we were in so many respects a part of almost every nation represented in that organization. There is now being prepared a sort of cultural Baedeker of the city. It is, indeed, impressive. It makes one realize that cultural differences are as enriching today as they have always been. In fact, a case could be made for the proposition that cultural advance is dependent upon the continuous replenishing of life by outside peoples and ideas. The first five great civilizations of the world were located at the crossroads of culture.

What do these facts mean to us today? I believe they mean that the hope of the future rests in preserving this way of life we have developed out of the experience of the past. I believe it would

COMMON GROUND

be disastrous to shut off migration to our shores. I believe it would be fatal to let the hysteria of the moment cause us to draw an iron curtain around ourselves to shut out any part of the outside world. The defenses of democracy are in the minds of men. If our defenses are breached, it will, in my opinion, be because in the hysteria of the moment we begin shutting out part of our population, and saying they should not be allowed to participate because they differ. We now know enough about group work to know that democracy is done when those who differ are made to feel isolated from the group.

The courts recently restored citizenship to a group of Americans of Japanese ancestry who were so mistreated during the war that they renounced their birthright of American citizenship. To right that fiasco we are now walking back, hat in hand, and heads bowed in shame that in a moment of hysteria we could have, in an orgy of hate, forgotten our heritage so completely. The Nisei of California should be a case study for us all in how prejudice can be used to make us forget our democratic heritage by using a minority as a "whipping boy."

In my experience with the Mayor's Committee on Unity, the acid test of this theory of tolerance for difference was perhaps made in the case of Benjamin Davis. This Communist councilman from Manhattan, who is now under trial for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government, was considered dangerous to the community by many who feared he would persuade the Negroes in Harlem to the Communist cause. Obviously, this he did his best to accomplish.

For years he made a studied attempt to discredit the police force, the courts, and every other governmental agency in the community. The answer to Davis was not to put him out of action. If he has plotted to overthrow the government, he should be treated as any other traitor; but the defense to his arguments must come through a process by which people are convinced as to the rightness or wrongness of what he has to say, and not by censoring him.

Undoubtedly a tougher fabric of public opinion exists in Harlem as a result of Davis' "yammering away" up there. The minds of the doubting Thomases should by now be disabused of any fears they might have had that Negroes would be gullible and "sold a bill of goods" by the Communists.

The real challenge of citizenship today is that we not let these fears of alien ideologies cause us to distrust each other. That is the quickest and surest way to deliver the country to fascism and blow out the light of democracy.

This is, in substance, a speech delivered by Dan W. Dodson before the annual conference of the National Council on Naturalization and Citizenship in March 1949 in New York City. Dr. Dodson was for four years executive director of the Mayor's Committee on Unity in New York City. An associate professor of education at New York University, he is now Director of Curriculum and Research for the Center for Human Relations Studies there. He is managing editor of the Journal of Educational Sociology and a contributor to various periodicals.

THE GOLDEN MYTH

D'ARCY McNICKLE

NOT OFTEN in man's history has anything so astonishing occurred as the discovery of an entirely new and unpredicted world, peopled by an unknown race. The Europeans who made the discovery saw in the event, and in the people encountered, reflections of their own experience and history. They compared the scenery, the climate, and the fruits of the land to the things they knew at home. They ascribed to the people the customs, beliefs, and institutions with which they were familiar. They called headmen, kings and princes. They found evidences of their own type of religious practices, and evidences as well of practices which they considered irreligious. They complained of breaches of their own marriage laws or moral codes.

These hasty conclusions and failures of understanding offered a poor basis on which to build relations for the future. The same failings remain in our day as habits of mind which block the efforts of a kindly majority to absorb a persevering minority. It is important to understand some of the attitudes and some of the events which characterized the early meetings of the first settlers [the Indians] and their discoverers.

In the beginning, Columbus was charmed.

"We saw houses and people on the spot, and the country around was very beautiful, and as fresh and green as the gardens of Valencia in the month of March," he wrote after his first voyage.

"Villages were seen near the seacoast,

but as I discovered no large cities, and could not obtain any communication with the inhabitants, who all fled at our approach, I continued on west, thinking I should not fail in the end to meet with great towns and cities. . . ." He was at the time skirting the coast of Cuba but assuming, of course, that he was in Asiatic waters.

On another occasion he wrote: "The people of this island [Haiti] and of all the others which I have become acquainted with, go naked as they were born, although some of the women wear at the loins a leaf or bit of cotton cloth, which they prepare for that purpose. They do not possess iron, steel, or weapons, and seem to have no inclination for the latter, being timorous to the last degree. . . . After they have shaken off their fear of us, they display a liberality in their behavior which no one would believe without witnessing it. No request of anything from them is ever refused, but they rather invite acceptance of what they possess, and manifest such a generosity that they would give away their own hearts. Let the article be of great or small value, they offer it readily, and receive anything which is tendered in return with perfect content. I forbade my men to purchase their goods with such worthless things as bits of platters and broken glass . . . The sailors would buy of them for a scrap of leather pieces of gold weighing two castellanos and a half. . . . I thought such traffic unjust."

In all of this, and more, he was

charmed. "They are not idolaters," he explained, "nor have they any sort of religion except believing that power and goodness are in heaven, from which place they entertained a firm persuasion that I had come with my ships and men. On this account wherever we met them they showed us the greatest reverence after they had overcome their fear. Such conduct cannot be ascribed to their want of understanding, for they are a people of much ingenuity, and navigate all those seas. . . ."

Such engaging simplicity did not get in the way of practical necessities. Columbus showed his respect for practical need in a letter to Santangel, who provided the cash for his first voyage: "On my arrival at the Indies I took by force from the first island I came to a few of the inhabitants, in order that they might learn our language."

Other clouds cast their shadows over the fresh, green New World. It had proved difficult to enlist colonists who would risk sailing over the edge of the horizon, even though it be in the company of the "Admiral of the Ocean Seas." A Royal Proclamation was therefore issued ordering "that all and every person . . . who may have committed, or up to the day of publication of this our letter, may commit any murders and offenses, and other forms of crimes of whatever nature and quality they may be . . . shall go and serve in person in Espaniola."

Of the colonists who were persuaded voluntarily to seek their fortunes in the islands, Columbus complained: "All is in favor of the settlers who have taken up their abode there because the best lands are given up to them. . . . I should not say so much if these people were married men; but there are not six among them all whose purpose is not to amass all they can, and then decamp with it."

Then this further disillusioning note:

"For one [native] woman they give a hundred castellanos, as for a farm; and this sort of trading is very common, and there are already a great number of merchants who go in search of girls. There are at this moment some nine or ten on sale; they fetch a good price, let their age be what it will."

Misunderstandings occurred on both sides. Perhaps that is the easiest way to explain it. The Indians thought that these were gods descending from the sky, and they were properly humble. Everywhere throughout the New World that was the initial reaction. The Indians met the white men full of wonder. They held out their hands to touch their garments, their pale skin. They brought offerings of food and of whatever else they had and prized.

The Europeans knew that they were not gods, and being practical men who had risked their lives and capital investments they were eager to obtain returns. Absconding with natives and carrying them back to Europe served two purposes—it reassured the creditors of the expedition that a new and strange world had been discovered and that perhaps an additional outlay of capital was warranted; while the sale of the natives as slaves, if no other articles of value had been obtained, permitted at least an interest payment on the original investment.

What the Europeans could not appreciate was that they had come face to face with customs, beliefs, habits—cultures—which had been twenty thousand or more years in the forming. Whether these were inferior or superior was inconsequential; they had grown out of an antiquity of their own, and if left to develop were capable of growing into civilizations quite unlike anything that Europe would produce. Already in that New World cities had grown old and fallen into decay and new cities were building.

THE GOLDEN MYTH

The human spirit was finding many ways in which to make the universe acceptable to itself.

The practical, enterprising men who sailed the seas and made the discoveries had no insight into any of this, but theirs was not the only failure. The tales which they brought back and published started a chain of speculation which, while it did not explain the Americans or the American experience, did illuminate some of the recesses in the thinking of the Europeans.

In brief, Columbus and the countless men who followed him into the New World, found what they thought was a people living in an age of innocence. They thought this because their own mythology taught them that all mankind once lived in such an age and had fallen from grace. Columbus wrote: "They do not know any religion, and I believe they could easily be converted to Christianity, for they are very intelligent. . . . They are a loving people, without covetousness, and fit for anything. . . . They love their neighbors as themselves, and their speech is the sweetest and gentlest in the world. . . ."

European literature has a long tradition of glorifying the virtuous past. Ovid, writing in the surfeited times of Augustus, resurrected the golden age of antiquity and captured the jaded imaginations of his readers. Tacitus, a generation later, writing his *Germania*, held up to a cynical audience the mirror of a simple and barbaric people.

Montaigne was possibly the first European to find in the accounts of the New World the very virtues which blazed in antiquity and then died out to leave his generation tired and sick. Reading what the mariners had to say of the lands they visited, or perhaps even listening to word-of-mouth accounts, and looking out from his tower upon a world of desperate in-

trigue and ingenious cruelty (the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was one culmination of the age), he found himself regretting that Plato had not lived to share the new knowledge. Clearly, Montaigne thought, here was a world which surpassed the imagined perfection of the Republic.

Look you, he would say to Plato, here is a nation which "hath no kind of traffic, no knowledge of letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politics, no use of service, of riches or of poverty; no contracts, no successions, no partitions, no occupation but idle; no apparel but natural, no manuring of lands, no use of wine . . . the very words that import a lie, falsehood, treason, covetousness, envy, detraction were never heard among them. . . . Furthermore, they live in a country of so exceeding pleasant and temperate situation, that as my testimonies have told me, it is very rare to see a sick body amongst them. . . . They spend the whole day in dancing. The young men go a hunting after wild beasts with bows and arrows. Their women busy themselves therewith. . . ."

Even the report that these gentle creatures sometimes practiced cannibalism did not disturb the enraptured essayist. "I am not sorry we note the barbarous horror of such an action, but grieved that prying so narrowly into their faults, we are so blinded in ours. I think there is more barbarism in eating men alive than to feed upon them being dead; to mangle by tortures and torments a body full of lively sense, to roast him in pieces, to make dogs and swine to gnaw and tear him (as we have not only read but seen very lately, not amongst ancient enemies, but our neighbors and fellow citizens; and which is worse, under pretense of piety and religion)." Then a final sentence: "We may then well call them barbarous, in regard of reason's rules, but

not in respect of us that exceed them in all kinds of barbarism."

Not only was virtue seen in simplicity, but the European tradition also supported a suspicion of learning. The notion is best voiced by Erasmus, in one of those passages in *In Praise of Folly* which seem to come from both sides of the mouth at once: "The simple people of the golden age were furnished with no school knowledge. Nature alone sufficed to guide them; instinct to prompt them how to live. . . . What would have been the advantage of jurisprudence to men amongst whom bad morals—the sole apology for good laws—had no existence? It is clear to you, I presume, now that those who make wisdom their study, by so doing, make themselves the most miserable of mankind. . . . By the immortal gods, then, I solemnly swear to you that no class of men is happier than that of those whom the world calls simpletons, fools, and blockheads!"

Such was the European dream: a land where men were physically handsome and morally virtuous; where one could live without fighting and murdering; where food could be gathered without laboring for it, and where one spent one's days in a perpetual dance. With respect to such desires, perhaps they were not a great deal different from those nurtured by the men who first crossed over from Asia in search of an easier existence.

It was not Rousseau who invented the idea of the Noble Savage. The impulse to believe that such a man of nature existed had long been present in European minds, in the desire to escape the ills and the complexities which their civilization had brought upon them, and in the idealism which ran through Western thought, driving men to believe in the perfectability of life on earth. It became the very breath of the poetry of Goldsmith, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Shel-

ley. And it permeated the literature of the continent as well.

Hardheaded men like Dr. Johnson were not beguiled by the concept of the Noble Savage. "Pity is not natural to man," Johnson insisted. "Children are always cruel. Savages are always cruel."

This wholly opposite view was a natural enough reaction, but it is to be doubted whether it contributed anything to an understanding of the New World and the men who inhabited it. With a minimum of factual knowledge, Dr. Johnson and others who shared his sentiments reached sweeping conclusions. As when he challenged Boswell with: "The savages have no bodily advantages beyond those of civilized man. They have not better health; and as to care or mental uneasiness, they are not above it but below it, like bears." And on another occasion: "There are men who have preferred living among savages. Now what a wretch must he be, who is content with such conversation as can be had among savages!"

When a traveler is reported to Dr. Johnson as having said, "Here am I, free and unrestrained, amid the rude magnificence of nature, with this Indian woman by my side, and this gun with which I can procure food when I want it. What more can be desired for human happiness?" Johnson was derisive. "It is sad stuff; it is brutish. If a bull could speak, he might as well exclaim: Here am I with this cow and this grass; what being could enjoy greater felicity?"

What Dr. Johnson's blunt skepticism helped to accomplish on the philosophical side, the published accounts of white captives among Indians accomplished for the unreflecting reader. The story of Mary Rollandson's captivity appeared in 1682, six years after her experience with the Indians in King Philip's War. This account, published originally in Cambridge,

Massachusetts, had a London edition immediately afterwards and altogether thirty editions and reprints were brought out. Probably one of the most widely read early accounts of Indian-white relations, it did nothing to advance understanding.

Although Mrs. Rollandson and two of her children (a third died as a result of exposure) were released after a captivity of about three months, and she appears not to have been subject to any hardships that the Indians themselves were not forced to undergo from cold weather and lack of food, the experience lived in her mind as an indescribable horror. The Indians she thought to be "atheistical, proud, wild, cruel, barbarous, brutish." One detects the flavor of New England preaching in some of her passages: "Oh, the roaring, and singing, and dancing, and yelling of those black creatures in the night, which made the place a lively resemblance of hell."

There were many such tales. Cotton Mather was one of the most accomplished purveyors of overwrought picturizations of Indian cruelty and bloodlust. He chilled the blood of his listeners with stories of white captive children having their heads knocked against a tree or an eye gouged out when they cried too much.

Neither extreme was likely to promote understanding. The "sweetest and gentlest" people of Columbus' description could hardly be the brutish creatures discussed by Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Rollandson. They were the same people, racially, yet there seemed to be no middle ground where neutral judgments could be formed.

The most nearly rounded impression of what the Indian people looked like to European observers is to be found in the mountainous anecdote contained in the seventy-three volumes of "Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents" compiled by

Reuben Gold Thwaites. The Indian material, fortunately, has been extracted by Edna Kenton and published in two volumes. The evaluations of native life are especially valuable because of the time span covered by the documents, from 1610 to 1791, and because of the variety of conditions under which the observations were made. The information is often inconclusive or inaccurate or self-contradictory, and judgments which might have seemed unassailable three hundred years ago may seem inadequate today. Yet it would be difficult to find any comparable body of comment on the problems which must arise when primitive and civilized men meet and try to understand each other.

Frequently the circumstances were far from the best for the promotion of understanding. Thus a French Jesuit wrote in 1639 from his Montreal station: "If you go to visit them in their cabins . . . you will find there a miniature picture of hell—seeing nothing, ordinarily, but fire and smoke, and on every side naked bodies, black, half-roasted, mingled pell-mell with the dogs, which are held as dear as the children of the house, and share the beds, plates, and food of their masters. Everything is in that cloud of dust and if you go within, you will not reach the end of the cabin before you are completely befouled with soot, silt, and dirt."

And he writes of manners: "I found myself very much embarrassed in the beginning; for not daring to cut the meat they gave me in my bark dish, for fear of spoiling the dish, I did not know how to manage it, not having any plate. Finally I had to become all to all, and a savage with these savages. I cast my eyes upon my companion, then I tried to be as brave a man as he was. He took his meat in his open hand, and cut from it morsel after morsel, as you would do with a piece

of bread. But if the meat is a little tough, or if it slips away from the knife from being too soft, they hold one end of it with their teeth, and the other with the left hand, then the right plays upon it in violin fashion, the knife serving as a bow. . . . If you were to lose your knife . . . you are compelled to take your share in your two hands, and to bite into the flesh and into the fat as bravely but not so politely as you would bite into a quarter of an apple. God knows how the hands, the mouth, and a part of the face shine after this operation. The trouble was, I did not know upon what to wipe them. To carry linen with you would require a mule. I saw a woman who taught me a secret; she wiped her hands upon her shoes, and I did the same. . . ."

Social practices were as baffling as physical circumstances, according to a 1634 report. "We have kept here [at Montreal] and fed for a long time a sick savage, who came and threw himself into our arms in order to die a Christian. . . . All his fellow savages were astonished at the good treatment we gave him; on his account his children brought a little elk meat, and they were asked what they wished in exchange, for the presents of the savages are always bargains. They asked some wine and gunpowder, and were told that we could not give them these things; but that, if they wished something else that we had, we would give it to them very gladly. A good meal was then given them, and finally they carried back their meat, since we did not give them what they asked for, threatening that they would come after their father, which they did; but the good man did not wish to leave us. . . ."

"Do not think that they act thus among themselves; on the contrary they are very grateful, very liberal, and not in the least importunate toward those of their own nation. If they conduct them-

selves thus toward our French, and toward other foreigners, it is because, it seems to me, that we do not wish to ally ourselves with them as brothers, which they would very much desire. But this would ruin us in three days; for they would want us to go with them, and eat their foods as long as they had any, and then they would come and eat ours as long as it lasted; and when there was none left, we would all set to work to find more. . . . If you carry on your affairs apart from them, despising their laws or their customs, they will drain from you, if they can, even your blood. There is not an insect, nor wasp, nor gadfly, so annoying as a savage."

The difficulties were more subtle even than that. One priest wrote in 1710: "These people [evidently the Hurons] seek a reputation for liberality and generosity; they give away their property freely and very seldom ask any return; nor do they punish thieves otherwise than with ridicule and derision. If they suspect that anyone seeks to accomplish an evil deed by means of false pretenses, they do not restrain him with threats, but with gifts. From the same desire for harmony comes their ready assent to whatever one teaches them; nevertheless, they hold tenaciously to their native belief or superstition, and on that account are the more difficult to instruct. For what can one do with those who in word give agreement and assent to everything, but in reality give none?"

Occasionally an individual Indian could be diabolically exasperating, as in the case of a certain Sorcerer—to use the term which the priest insisted on using. For years, before the Jesuits came, according to Le Jeune, the Sorcerer had been living a life of ease by tricking his people into believing that he possessed supernatural powers which enabled him to help his friends and destroy his enemies. Le Jeune naturally took upon

himself the task of proving that the Indian was an imposter, and it was equally natural that the Indian shaman should perceive the Jesuit's design and take measures to countervail him. Le Jeune does not spare himself in reciting the embarrassments which he suffered at the hands of his rival. Thus the Indian would brag about his prowess with women, and the priest, bristling in indignation, would preach on the evils of promiscuous love.

"I told him," says Le Jeune, "that it was not honorable for a woman to love any one else except her husband; and that, this evil being among them, he himself was not sure that his son, who was there present, was his son. He replied, 'Thou hast no sense. You French people love only your own children; but we all love the children of our tribe.' I began to laugh, seeing that he philosophized in horse and mule fashion. . . ."

It was some time before Le Jeune caught on to one trick which the shaman was practicing on him. He would have Le Jeune pronounce words, drilling him patiently in correct pronunciation. Later when the priest used them he would produce an uproar in his audience. Only much later would someone reveal that he had been speaking obscenities. One gets the impression that the shaman was never outfaced.

There is no gainsaying that these Jesuits achieved insight. Father Ragueneau must have been a particularly acute observer. He wrote in 1648: "In addition to the desires that we generally have that are free—or, at least, voluntary in us—which arise from a previous knowledge of some goodness that we imagine to exist in the thing desired, the Hurons believe that our souls have other desires which are, as it were, inborn and concealed. These, they say, come from the depths of the soul, not through any knowledge, but by

means of a certain blind transporting of the soul to certain objects. . . .

"Now they believe that our souls make these natural desires known by means of dreams, which are its language. . . .

"Now the Hurons do not seek to ascertain whence this power, both for good and for evil, comes to the soul; for as they are neither physicists nor philosophers they do not inquire very deeply into those matters. . . .

"In consequence of these erroneous ideas, most of the Hurons are very careful to note their dreams, and to provide the soul with what it has pictured to them during their sleep. . . ."

The ideas may have seemed erroneous to Father Ragueneau, but the modern psychiatrist would probably find good sense in this, as well as in a further passage from the same writer: "The Hurons recognize three kinds of diseases. Some are natural, and they cure these with natural remedies. Others, they believe, are caused by the soul of the sick person, which desires some thing; for these they cure by obtaining for the soul what it desires. Finally the others are diseases caused by a spell that some sorcerer has cast upon the sick person; these diseases are cured by withdrawing from the patient's body the spell that causes his sickness."

This same Father Ragueneau wrote what ought to be the classic admonishment to all missionaries, anthropologists, administrators, in short to all students and workers who deal with the customs and beliefs of a people other than their own. He closed his narrative with saying: "Had I to give counsel to those who commence to labor for the conversion of the savages, I would willingly say a word of advice to them. . . . One must be very careful before condemning a thousand things among their customs, which greatly of-

fend minds brought up and nourished in another world. It is easy to call irreligious what is merely stupidity, and to take for diabolical working something that is nothing more than human; and then, one thinks that he is obliged to forbid as impious certain things that are done in all innocence, or at most are silly, but not criminal customs. . . . It is difficult to see everything in one day, and time is the most faithful instructor that one can consult. . . .”

And Father Le Jeune wrote: “They do not comprehend our theology well, but they comprehend perfectly our humility and our friendliness, and allow themselves to be won.”

At other times and in other places on the continent there were similar first encounters between white men and Indians. What the white men saw and reported is always interesting, sometimes amusing, occasionally so vivid as to make us feel that we ourselves are present, observing with our own eyes and forming our own judgments. Over and over we are impressed with how difficult it is to see a people as they are, not as we conceive they ought to be.

One observer was John Lawson, who traveled among the Indians of the Carolinas at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His *History of Carolina* was published in London in 1709.

Of the Congaree Indians, one of the Siouan tribes which disappeared under the impact of white settlement, Lawson wrote: “These are a very comely sort of Indians, there being a strange difference in the proportions and beauty of these heathens. Although their tribes or nations border upon one another, yet you may discern as great an alteration in their features and dispositions as you can in their speech, which generally proves quite different from each other, though their

nations be not ten or twenty miles in distance.”

Lawson had an eye for a fine featured woman and never failed to comment when he encountered one. Of the same Congaree he wrote: “The women here are as handsome as most I have met withal, being several fine fingered (sic) brunettos among them. These lasses stick not upon hand long, or they marry when very young, as at twelve or fourteen years of age.”

He comments on a flourishing custom of the time: “The English traders are seldom without an Indian female for his bedfellow, alleging these reasons as sufficient to allow of such familiarity. First, they being remote from any white people, that it preserves their friendship with the heathens, they esteeming a white man’s child much above one of their own getting, the Indian miss’s ever securing her white friend provisions whilst he stays with them. And lastly, this correspondence makes them learn the Indian tongue much the sooner, they being of the Frenchman’s opinion, how that an English wife teaches her French husband more English in one night than a school-master can in a week.”

Lawson did not by any means have a good opinion of all the Indians he met, some of whom he found to be lazy and others to be accomplished thieves (of white men’s goods). Of the Waxhaw, however, he wrote: “These Indians are of an extraordinary stature. . . . I never saw an Indian of mature age that was anyways crooked, except by accident, and that way seldom; for they cure and prevent deformities in the limbs and body very exactly.

“At our Waxhaw’s landlord’s cabin, was a woman employed in no other business than cookery, it being a house of great resort. The fire was surrounded with roast meat, or barbecues, and the pots

continually boiling, full of meat from morning till night. This she-cook was the cleanliest I ever saw amongst the heathens of America, washing her hands before she undertook to do any cookery; and repeated this unusual decency very often in a day. She made us as white bread as any English could have done."

He reports what must have been an almost universal custom among Indian tribes: "Whensoever an aged man is speaking, none ever interrupts him, the company yielding a great deal of attention to his tale with a continued silence and an exact demeanor during the oration. Indeed, the Indians are a people that never interrupt one another in their discourse; no man so much as offering to open his mouth until the speaker has uttered his intent."

Not the least of the wonders he reported was that "amongst women, it seems impossible to find a scold; if they are provoked or offended by their husbands, or some other, they resent the indignity offered them in silent tears, or by refusing their meat." And he adds, "Would some of our European daughters set these Indians for a pattern. . . ."

Always in these first encounters, the pattern of friendliness. "They are a loving people," wrote Columbus. When Antonio Espejo journeyed among the Rio Grande pueblos in 1583, he found a pleasant people, brightly dressed in embroidered cotton costumes, filling their plazas to greet him, offering "a great quantity of turkeys, maize, beans, tortillas, and other kinds of bread," which, the Spaniards thought, was made "with more nicety than the Mexican." When Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo sailed through the Santa Barbara Channel off the California coast in 1542, the people, warm, friendly, came out in many canoes, swarmed over the ships' decks, gave him the names of the

many villages that fronted the shore, shared their fish, "fresh and very good." Always that first friendliness.

As late as the 19th century initial contacts were still being made, or earlier contacts were maturing into stable relationships. The quality of the contact was not greatly changed, but depended as always on the intelligence and insight of the principals involved.

Daniel W. Harmon, who managed fur trading posts for the Northwest Company, afterwards merged with the Hudson's Bay Company, kept a meticulous journal of his experiences. He was a sober and reflective man, always with a firm grip on what went on around him. He was stationed at a post just west of Lake Winnipeg in March 1802. It was still the dead of winter in the north country, when food begins to give out and cold spells seem to run overlong. It is the very height of the prime fur season, when the trader must view with the strongest disfavor any Indian who comes straggling into the post expecting to be fed and warmed when he should be out gathering in the harvest which will make the year profitable.

So we can visualize Mr. Harmon frowning in exasperation as he makes his entry for March 20: "The greater number of our Indians have returned from the prairies; as they have brought little with them to trade, I, of course, give them as little; for we are at too great a distance from the civilized world to make many gratuities. Yet the Indians were of a different opinion; and at first made use of some unpleasant language. But we did not come to blows, and are now preparing to retire to rest, nearly as good friends as the Indians and traders generally are. With a few exceptions, that friendship is little more than their fondness for our property, and our eagerness to obtain their furs."

Two months later matters were better.

COMMON GROUND

The profits would be earned after all. He wrote: "All the Indians belonging to this place have now come in with the produce of their hunts, which is abundant; and to reward them for their industry, I clothed two of their chiefs, and gave a certain quantity of spirits to them, and to the others. With this they became intoxicated, and continued so during the night, which prevented our closing our eyes to sleep. . . . While in that condition they, like other people, often do things which they will regret in their sober moments."

The quality of the contact had not deepened or become enriched over a span of three hundred years. Something to this effect was in a comment made by another traveler in the north woods, General Sir William Francis Butler, who, in the winter of 1872-73 traveled by dog team from the forks of the Saskatchewan River through Peace River Pass and down the valley of the Fraser River. Writing in the dead of winter at his Saskatchewan River camp, while his thermometer registered seventy degrees of frost, he noted in his journal:

"In nearly all the dealings of the white man with the red . . . the mistake of judging and treating Indians by European standards has been made. Indian character is worth the study, if we will only take the trouble to divest ourselves of the

notion that all men should be like ourselves. There is so much of simplicity and cunning, so much of close reasoning and childlike suspicion; so much natural quickness, sense of humor, credulousness, power of observation, faith and fun and selfishness mixed up together in the red man's mental composition, that the person who will find nothing in Indian character worth studying will be likely to start from a base of nullity in his own brain system."

And he recalls that Goldsmith, when he attempted to teach English in France, concluded that "it was necessary I should previously learn French before I could teach them English."

This is a chapter from D'Arcy McNickle's forthcoming book on the American Indians, They Came Here First, to be published by Lippincott in July in their Peoples of America series. Mr. McNickle has been with the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs since 1936. A member of the Flathead Tribe in Montana, he is the author of a novel about Indians, The Surrounded, published by Dodd, Mead in 1936. He has had several pieces earlier in COMMON GROUND: "We Go On From Here," Autumn 1943; "Snowfall," Summer 1944; and "Afternoon on a Rock," Spring 1945.

THEY BELONGED

THOMAS SANCTON

HE WAS a tall, slightly built Negro. His skin was light. His hair was a brownish shade, growing thin, and combed in tight waves against his head. He had a thin mustache which made a dark line against his lighter skin. He wore a checked red flannel shirt and a yellow wool tie, a trench coat and soft felt hat. He moved with a loose-gaited stride, and his jaunty clothes fit him well. He had a manner. He was a person with assurance, directness, warmth; a civilized man. A painter.

One night, at a gathering in Harlem, he told a story of an experience—neither violent, nor in its externals dramatic—which tells of a certain kind of suffering and injustice that is as real as lynching. I found myself thinking about it on the New Haven train as I traveled home that night, and while the details were fresh in mind I wrote it down.

"Somehow, as a boy growing up in New York," he said, "being a Negro wasn't so very tough for me. My father had a decent job, and things were relatively easy for us. I went to Governor Clinton High School—a good school, big and cosmopolitan and pretty much emancipated on the race business. It had to be. It drew children of every kind of race and nation you ever heard of. I bet the student body all together could speak ninety per cent of all the basic languages in the world.

"And I was a lucky boy in another way because I caught on quick in my lessons. Mathematics, languages, art class—every-

thing. I got good grades. I loved it. I was mixed up in everything, dramatics, athletics, everything. I studied hard. I enjoyed it all. They were good years. Sometimes I was hurt a little—some jerk would call me a dinge where I could hear him. And the kids had circles of friends that went out dating and dancing, and I was left out. Some of the white girls were nice though. We'd clown on the stage at rehearsals and burlesque the lines—stuff like that. Sometimes when everybody was talking and laughing and we stood around trying to figure out a piece of stage setting, I forgot about being a Negro. I guess the white kids did too at times. Being light-skinned made it easier for me. That way it doesn't stick in front of their eyes so much.

"High school was a good time for me. My painting began to develop and I worked at it. It gave me a lot of pleasure. I kept busy. I guess I was happy. I made high grades, I was in dramatics and athletics, I had fine faculty reports in my record. And there wasn't a single thing in my personal file that the high school kept to indicate I was a Negro. I lived in a neighborhood outside Harlem. My name didn't have any 'ski' on the end of it. It was Anglo-Saxon, and so far as anyone could tell just from looking at the record, I was white and middle-class.

"That high school record indirectly messed me up when I went to Columbia—because it was a good one. That's a laugh. You know these fraternities up here, they don't operate like they do in

smaller colleges. In little jerkwater colleges, fraternities are pretty exclusive—from what I've read about them. If your old man was a member, you're in; if he peddled magazine subscriptions, the hell with you. Stuff like that. In a big school like Columbia they can't be so meticulous. They have a big student body, people from all over the country, all over the world. Fraternities have to have a big turnover. They can't just operate with a membership of boys whose fathers or uncles were members—there just aren't enough of them. The New York boys who come to Columbia—their high school records are sent to the university. The fraternities go over the records. If you've got a Gentile name and made good grades and played football or belonged to the Glee Club, stuff like that, the chances are some fraternity will look you over. You get a bid to come to lunch or to a dance or something. If you wear good clothes and eat with a fork, maybe they ask you to join. Well, one of these big fraternities—Sigma something—they sent me an invitation to come to lunch. And I went."

He looked at me for a moment. He was remembering a deep and enduring humiliation. His face, which at times seemed both gay and poignant, had no gaiety now. "I don't tell this story often," he said. "I was hurt too much." For a moment he said nothing.

"Well," he said briskly, taking up the narrative, "I went to the lunch.

"I shouldn't have gone. It was my own fault. But I felt so happy when I got the invitation, I went kind of whacky. Great God, I wish you could—I wish you could feel it as I felt it fifteen years ago. There I was, happy to be in Columbia to begin with, and then one wonderful morning I take this mysterious letter out of the mail box and it's this Sigma-something asking me to come to their frater-

nity house for lunch. In my heart I had been wondering all along if there wasn't just an outside chance that I would get a chance to join a fraternity.

"At first, actually, I did wonder if they'd made a mistake. I should have been able to figure out what had happened. But—I don't know—I was only seventeen. I had new clothes. I had new books. I was starting a wonderful new life. I must have thought that anything could happen.

"Nevertheless, I did ask a few people for advice. I had two friends from Governor Clinton, Negroes. They hadn't got any bids. I showed them the note and asked what they thought. They threw cold water on me. They said 'Stay away; they don't mean it.' 'Why the hell did they invite me then? They didn't have to,' I said. 'I never even knew this outfit existed.' Well, I didn't know. . . . I wanted to go, and here I was with a legitimate invitation. So I said, hell, I was going.

"I didn't think about much else for a week. The weather was perfect—sunny autumn. I studied hard because I was so excited. I had got the breaks in my schedule of professors; I had some of the best freshman teachers in the university. And my clothes! A good tan jacket, and good slacks, and good shirts and ties; a good suit, too. Listen, these were good clothes. Conservative styles, and good blended colors that I liked. That whole summer I had shopped around trying to get the best clothes I could for the money I had to spend.

"And all that week I was as happy as I had ever been in my life. I studied like hell. I worked in the library until it closed at night, and as I walked home my head was full of plans. Finally the Saturday morning came, and I got dressed solid, and walked on down to this fraternity house.

THEY BELONGED

"It was a big, roomy, club-looking old home, right off Riverside Drive. I went in and here was this big living room with a fireplace, and a lot of boys standing around. There must have been twenty or thirty in the room, everyone talking and laughing. There was a ping-pong game going on in the next room. The rooms made a fine scene—well composed. There was a big log fire in the fireplace, and well-dressed kids with clean-cut faces and crew haircuts, lounging about on overstuffed chairs and sofas. The colors and textures hit me. Deep red and black plaid socks against the leather chairs. Yellow ties. Red and black and orange pennants on the wall, all kinds of colors. The fire in the hearth. Brass andirons shining. God, it was beautiful. I was hungry, too. There was a wonderful smell of roast or something drifting in from the kitchen. Across the hall some guy in a white jacket was setting a long table. There was a centerpiece with a bowl of bright yellow carnations. I could see the silver and the bread and butter at every place on the linen, and the place cards, and bowls of celery, and shiny black olives. And these boys talking and shouting and making bets on the ping-pong game, and the fire snapping. I felt wonderful there.

"The president of the lodge came up to me with a sort of blank look on his face and said how-do-you-do and introduced himself. He was an athlete of some kind, I could see, maybe a runner. He was long and wiry, with a skinny, handsome face—sunburned. Everything about him was neat. We shook hands and I told him my name. He said, 'Oh yes.' Well, he took it all with a straight face. And we began to talk about this and that. He asked me about athletics and stuff like that; what was my best time for the quarter-mile, and who were the good runners coming up from the New York high schools. Some of the older members

came up and he introduced me, and they all took it with a straight face. I began to figure I was in. I felt wonderful. I wondered how much the dues cost, and I began to run over in my mind what kind of little job I might get after school to raise the money. It was really a good feeling, standing there in front of the fire, thinking I was going to be part of all this, these fellows were going to be my friends. It never occurred to me to think farther ahead than that; to wonder about the dances we would give, whether or not they would want me dancing with their girls.

"The president stayed with me and kept up a conversation. He was sincerely friendly. I felt proud about it. I thought he had taken a liking to me because we were trackmen. I looked around at the room and in my imagination I could see myself sitting there when I was a junior and a senior, reading, telling stories. I did notice some of the boys were giving me the eye—but what the hell. I couldn't expect everything to have changed. They would get used to me. After all, I wasn't a leper. I dressed as they did. I talked their jive. I had keys hanging on my vest. I read books. I wasn't really different from them. I knew they would see it.

"The radio was giving out with pre-game sports dope from over the country—Notre Dame, Army, Harvard, Yale, the West Coast. The air was full of the glamor of college names. The room even smelled like college to me. It was like a movie setting. I began to think how we would all go to the game together after lunch. We would pile in the convertibles out in the front with the red upholstery and the big Columbia stickers. It was a game with Holy Cross.

"Just before lunch one of the members beckoned the president from the hallway and he left me for a little while. Some other egg came over and said hello. But

COMMON GROUND

that was all. He just hung around. We passed a few words but I could see he didn't feel like talking. And somehow I was beginning to feel discouraged. It was a feeling of fear. It was beginning to grow in the pit of my stomach and I couldn't fight it off. I began to see how all the other kids were being introduced to one another and how everyone was talking about one thing and another; but we just stood by the fire. Finally the president came back and relieved this fellow, and we stood there some more. Then I began to feel a little better. Things can't be perfect, I figured; I can't expect them to treat me human the first day they meet me. I told myself it would be a couple of weeks before they would grow accustomed to me and relaxed about it, and let me feel as though I were really a member. I had been living in the future, you see, and picturing myself as already a member of the lodge.

"After a while the waiter came to the door and announced lunch was ready, and the boys jumped up and filed into the dining room. I was hungry. I turned to the president. I turned to him, and when I saw his face, all of a sudden I knew what was going to happen and I was miserable. He hadn't moved from the fire. Suddenly I was just a frightened seventeen-year-old boy. I became so self-conscious it made me lightheaded. My heart was pounding. I couldn't stand there any more. I managed a nonchalant voice and blurted, 'What do you say we go in?' and started off to trail behind the rest. That was the last thing in the world I wanted to say—to him. Fear made me do it.

"He said, 'Wait. Let me talk to you for a minute.' I could see he was nervous and unhappy too. He lit a cigarette and his hand was trembling.

"Well, the guy was nice about it, but that didn't help much. He apologized for

having to do such a lousy thing. He kept telling me over and over how the last thing in the world they wanted to do was to hurt a kid—but they didn't know I was a Negro. I know it really hurt him to have to do that to me. I could see it in his face. He said he didn't see that I was any different from the other kids; probably had more ability than most of them. And he wanted to take me out to a restaurant and buy me lunch.

"That did it. I couldn't eat there, but he would take me out some place. I tried not to cry, but my chin was trembling and my eyes poured over with tears. I told him never mind and grabbed my hat and got out of there. I went down to Riverside Park, down to the roadway, and cried like a baby. I sat on a bench facing the river, where people couldn't see me.

"After a while I stopped. I sat there looking at the cars going by. I made my mind go blank. I wouldn't think about it. And I began to feel relieved. I took my hat off and sat there in the hot sunlight, looking up the river toward the Palisades. I wasn't hungry any more.

"Finally I dug in my pocket for my football ticket and started to tear it up. Then I figured, what the hell. The world hadn't come to an end. And I didn't know where else to go that afternoon. So finally I went over to a subway and went to the stadium.

"I sat there, listening to the cheering, and watching all the happy people yelling and waving pennants. And I kept thinking over and over again that they belonged, and that I didn't."

Formerly managing editor of the New Republic, Thomas Sancton for the past few years has been working in the South. He is now Washington correspondent for the Nation.

ADOBE FOURTH DIMENSION

DOROTHY L. PILLSBURY

A TAOS INDIAN wraps his white blanket about him, mounts the latest in tractors, and turns the good adobe soil of his people's communal acres. His blanket came from the mail-order house; his tractor is high-class equipment. But not a seed will be dropped in those tractor-dug furrows until "Those Above" have been brought into the picture by age-old ceremonials of dancing, chanting, and the pounding of tombés.

Tomás Maldonado lives in an incredible Spanish village not sixty miles from Santa Fé. He is an airplane pilot for a commercial air line. Tomás is as good a pilot as his grandsire was a horseman, but around his neck he wears a battered silver medal of San Antonio. That medal he says saw him through the last war.

Young Jonathan MacGregor stretches his ministerial legs toward the warmth of piñon logs burning in his beehive-shaped adobe fireplace as he goes over next Sunday's Protestant sermon. But the Virgin of Guadalupe looks down from a turquoise-blue niche in the thick adobe wall beside his fireplace. Over the portrait of his Calvinist grandfather, who roared down the Santa Fé Trail in a covered wagon, hangs a feathered prayer stick fashioned by Zúñi fingers.

This mingling of three distinct cultures, Indian, Spanish, and northern European, in a radius of a hundred miles around Santa Fé, gives a strange fourth dimension to the region. In spite of unbelievable stupidities, this mingling has been going on here for years, imperceptibly and

gently as the processes of nature. No self-conscious "movements," no harping on the atrocious word "tolerance," have brought it about. The least sensitive tourist is aware of something exciting and inexplicable here. He calls it atmosphere and attributes it to the mile-and-a-half-high altitude, the fantastic natural scenery and the "quaintness" of two ancient cultures. The most prosaic dwellers in the region shrug their shoulders and say, "I don't know. There's something here. It gets you—sort of a magnetic current."

This fourth dimension, this mingling of three cultures, has come about in spite of, not because of, human intervention. It is as if this old crossroads of the world held some of the magic of the Indian medicine bag, a whisper of the super-human power of medieval saints, and an electric charge from the dynamo of modern American activity. It is potent in spite of people.

Winter after winter the Navajos pull in their thin pants tops and put their silver conchas belts in pawn for a sack of flour against starvation. Year after year three-quarters of their children have no more schooling than a chipmunk. Year after year Pueblo Indians fight for their land and water rights granted them by ancient Spanish law. New Mexico refuses the right to vote to its Indian citizens until a federal district court steps in and slaps down the local politicians. Anglo businessmen refuse to hire people with Spanish names and, if they do hire them, try to cut their wages atrociously. Dignitaries

of church and state are haled into court to answer why two hundred nuns have been found teaching in the public schools of the state, their salaries paid from public funds and going out of the state tax-free to mother orders far afield.

Yet in spite of this kind of thing, the old magnetic current of the area permeates the region as gently as the winter snows on the gray branches of the wild plum tree turn to a white froth of spring blossoms.

Artists, poets, and writing people generally, bewail the changes taking place in the old crossroads of the world. They want every adobe house (those inhabited by Spanish, of course) to have a burro tied outside or at most a rickety wood wagon pulled by sway-backed horses as a means of transportation. They weep over every pipe that brings gas to adobe settlements to replace wood stoves. They swooned when Tesuque Indian Pueblo was wired for electricity. When they visit the Spanish villages in the mulberry-blue shadow of Truchas Peaks, they are completely upset to discover a deep-freeze compartment in the village general store. They do not disdain a bottle of ice-cold pop, but they drive their excellent cars home to the tune of wild lamentation. "You should have seen this country forty years ago," they keen. "The beauty is all gone. There is nothing left to paint or write about."

They do not glimpse the beauty of the region's fourth dimension. It is one of the most heartening spectacles in the world today. It is also one of the most exciting because it is a portent of greatness to come.

The first dwellers in this land—Indians of various origins, speech, and customs, had one deep-rooted common denominator. It was and still is a profound harmony with the natural world around

them. Through all the years, through subjugation and indignity, they have never lost step with nature. They worked with nature, they never tried to control it. They did not cut down the forests, exterminate the wild life, nor deplete the soil. This keeping step with nature is the basis of all their beautiful ceremonials—their dancing and their ancient songs. From it derives their folkcraft of design in weaving, pottery making, and silver work. From it stems the impetus for the work of the excellent artists in color arising among them today and receiving wide recognition.

When the Spanish white man arrived on the scene, he happened to be of village stock, to a large extent. He, too, loved and cherished the soil. He does to this day. Like the Indian, he did not cut down the beautiful high-altitude pine forests of the region, nor drive out the animal life, nor deplete the soil. He raised for subsistence, not profit. Here four hundred years ago he found the Indian practicing irrigation through an intricate system of far-flung ditches. The Spaniard had brought with him the knowledge of such a system learned from the Moors. Here in the old crossroads of the world the two races met over a spider web of little ditches bringing water to an arid land.

In spite of regular and ruthless raids between the two groups, skills, techniques, and mental attitudes flowed back and forth between them. The Pueblo Indians lived in high-walled, compact little city-states built of adobe mud. The Spanish copied this housing so exactly that today it is difficult to distinguish between an Indian pueblo and a Spanish village. But they gave to their buildings a Spanish and often a Moorish accent, so that the prevailing architecture of the region is known today as Hispanic Indian and as such has been adopted by the third group,

the Anglos, both for homes and for elaborate public buildings. Distinguished architects declare that it is the outstanding example of strictly American architecture in the country.

It was corn that fed the Indians in their settled way of life in city-states, corn they had developed through the years to grow with the minimum of water in high altitudes and a short growing season. Soon corn was feeding the Spanish colonists hundreds of desert miles from a base of supplies. It remains today the staff of their diet.

The Spanish brought into the country the first domestic animals the Indians had ever seen (with the exception of the dog). Horses, goats, cattle, and sheep followed them over the weary miles from Mexico. Soon most of the Indians had a new mobility; the region became "a nation on horseback." They also acquired the other animals, especially the sheep. Many a raid centered around a remote mountain meadow where sheep were grazing.

From prehistoric times the Indians had woven vegetable fibers. Now from the Spanish they learned to weave wool. From that beginning has sprung a folk-craft of two races with the Navajo and Hopi weavers rating tops among the Indians and the craftsmen of Chimayó among the Spanish.

In spite of the missionary activities of the padres, the Indians have clung to their ancient religion. It went underground into the kiva in the early days of Spanish colonization, and there it has stayed through the years. A smiling, tight-lipped secrecy has preserved the ancient faith. During the war years it was no unusual thing to see an Indian youth in uniform dash into the pueblo during a ceremonial dance, run up the ladder to some adobe room, and emerge, not a soldier of the Army of the United States, but an

Indian. In hand-woven kilt, with all the symbols of his ancient faith on his body, with blue spruce twigs, abalone shell, turquoise and parrot feathers wired to his *co* haircut, he danced to "Those Who Are Above," "The Keepers of the Ways of Our Lives." The *tombés* still beat out the old earthy rhythms; the chanters still sing the old songs of rain and seed planting and harvest yield. Nonetheless, in a wattled green shelter in the dusty Indian plaza, will be enshrined a Spanish saint—San Diego, San Lorenzo, or Santa María Inmaculada, candles burning before them. Rosaries are extracted from the folds of ceremonial attire; knees that have been lifting in the old Indian rhythms bend to say a Catholic prayer before some Catholic saint.

Though the Indians still cherish their Indian medicine bags, still plant and harvest to the sound of ancient songs, they are meeting the impact of a modern age with a calm, selective discrimination which would surprise the average white man. They look with some amusement on the end products of the white man's living. They are not sure they want to be mixed up in our politics or our industrial expansion. They despise our hurry, our jitters, and our worry-twisted faces. They cringe before our bad manners, our eternal question, "how much," and our pants-wearing women. Indians they are proud to remain, but they are demanding the rights of American citizenship—the franchise, social security, tractors, trucks, and education for their children.

It is doubtful if the Spanish, who have been on the southwest adobe soil for four hundred years, could have taken root and produced branch and fruit of their culture without lessons learned from the Indians. Thousands of desert miles from their base of supplies, without a sea coast and the visits of white-winged galleons such as California knew, this out-

post of old Spain had to dig in or perish. The settlers learned how to dig in from the Indians, utilizing the natural gifts of the strange new land—in housing, in crop growing, and in food. The arts and crafts of the two groups flowed back and forth as naturally as water ran back and forth in the vast spider web of water ditches. Wood carving, tin work, turquoise and silver jewelry, woven rugs and blankets show often in the same product the imprint of both cultures.

The Spanish, who cling to this region and who love it with a passion, brought with them a fourth race, the shining denizens of heaven—their saints. These came into the country with the first colonists. Here they have taken root to become saints such as no other country has ever known. Dear familiars they are, companions, friends, members of the household; saints to whom a lonely blackshawled woman can talk or whom on occasion she may banish for misbehavior, in a hand-carved chest. The Indians accepted this fourth race and connected the saints with the Turquoise Woman who never grows old and the Rider who carries the bright paten of the sun across the sky. Anglos, too, of the most Protestant proclivities, fall under the charm of the indigenous saints and give them an honored place by their Calvinist firesides. In the beautiful candlelight procession once a year to the Cross of the Martyrs on the outskirts of Santa Fé, it is not unusual to see Protestants from many churches walking among the blackshawled women and little girls in first communion veils. Followers of the most modern of cults and thought shield their candle from the wind as they march between the burning piñon fires along the way. On their lips are the words of sonorous Latin hymns and the cadences of old Spanish songs.

These same Anglos cannot miss an

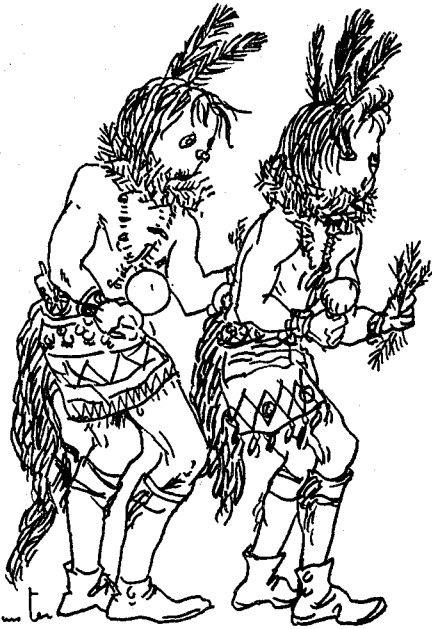
Indian dance. They go not as tourists to see a spectacle, but actually to feel some of the ancient rhythms of earth—seed planting and summer rain on the young green corn. Anglos live in modernized versions of Indian and Spanish homes. They live in them because they are beautiful, simple, and strangely satisfying. Their food habits have acquired a decided aroma of chile and blue corn meal. Their English speech bears a few grace notes of Spanish or Indian origin. Their clothing flowers with an Indian woven sash, a conchas belt, a velveteen Navajo jacket, or turquoise earrings. It is all natural and without self-consciousness.

Aside from the tangible influences on housing, food, clothing, and speech, have come certain intangible but potent factors. A grace of manner absorbed from the Spanish New Mexican, a serenity and strength gleaned from the Indian, have found their way into Anglo mental attitudes. The mingling of three cultures, three arts and skills, has produced almost a way of life here in adobe land, a great awareness of energies hidden here that will eventually come to light. You cannot look across hundreds of miles of almost uninhabited space without knowing there are vast potentialities hidden there. The pink arroyos, the purple buttes, the ruler-edged mesa tops fairly shout it.

The latest comers, the Anglos, are bringing some of these hidden things to light. The first Spaniards came into the country largely in the hope of finding even greater stores of gold than the kingdom of Montezuma had poured at their feet. But they found very little. Disgruntled, they returned to Mexico, to be followed by the soil-cherishing colonist. To this day, the region has produced little gold. But underneath the highly colored soil lay great deposits of black gold, petroleum. Last year 47,112,547 barrels were produced. Also under the pink sands

of the southern part of the state has been unearched an almost inexhaustible supply of potash—potash for the worn-out soils of eastern and southern states. The oil and the potash have been there since the days of the dinosaur. The gold-mad Spanish explorers walked right over them. So did the desert-trotting feet of countless Indians.

In Rio Arriba County only a few miles from Santa Fé, most of the inhabitants are Spanish. There they live on little subsistence farms much as their ancestors hundreds of years ago. There men plough



with a burro, bring water across an arroyo in a flume made of a hollowed-out pine tree. In time of drought or in time of flood, the local saint is carried about the ruined fields to the twanging of fiddles and the lilt of ancient songs. There, little wooden crosses protect each row of whispering corn and each scarlet chile plant. Anglos in the form of soil experts have been patiently working in

Rio Arriba County. They take off their sombreros to the farmers there. They marvel at the ancient irrigation systems, at the battered shovels and plows that produced crops. With their help, today those same farmers are banding together in co-operative enterprise to buy powerful tractors. They are cementing the intakes and outgoes of their little ditches against waste of precious water. They are grubbing out the sagebrush and planting grass for their woolly flocks.

If you climb the steep hill that leads to the Spanish village of Rio En Medio you will find on the summit a forest of handmade crosses. Some are only a foot or so high; some are as tall as a man. It was there that coffin bearers put down their burden to rest on the way to the graveyard in the valley below. Wherever a coffin was put down on the ground, village custom says a cross must be erected. You can look through that forest of medieval crosses to Jemez Mountain dark against a blood-red sunset sky. In the valley below, the white man's buses and cars skim along over hard boulevards toward towering cities, east and west. A plane cuts over the ruler-edge of Black Mesa. At the foot of the mesa little spirals of cedar smoke rise from a hundred supper fires in the golden Indian pueblo of San Ildefonso. When night drops down like an obliterating curtain suddenly on its mountain top, the atomic city of Los Alamos bursts into light like some air-and-flame-contrived city of another world.

Indians from San Ildefonso helped build that city of light on its mountain top. So did the descendants of Spanish colonists from a score of old-world villages. Miles they drove over terrible roads to earn the highest wages this region has ever known. Even the Anglo worker takes his job among the atoms quite in stride and says nonchalantly that he works "up on the hill." For miles around Los Alamos

COMMON GROUND

you can see the results of higher earning capacity for hundreds of Indians and Spanish. There are cars and trucks where once old wood wagons stood in front of adobe houses. There are tractors and shining new ploughs. Adobe houses blossom with tight new roofs and expand with a new room or two. Here an acre and there an acre, the Spanish are buying a little more land. "When it's all over," they say, shrugging their shoulders, "there will still be the land. It has always been that way." The Indians still usher the seasons on their way with dancing and chanting and the pounding of tombés to "Those Above." The Spanish still carry their saints in procession through village streets. The Anglos read up on splitting the atom and point out noted scientists on the streets of Santa Fé.

But permeating the region is the fourth dimension, serene and provocative. Here in the old crossroads of the world have met three distinct folkways. Each has kept what seemed important in its own culture, but has taken deep into its roots the cultures and skills of the other two. Tangibles and intangibles have mingled. Slowly, year by year, that mingling is increasing. In spite of injustice, stupidity, and broken promises, there is a whisper of hope blowing between the purple mesa tops in this land that has not only length, breadth, and thickness, but an indefinable fourth dimension.

Dorothy Pillsbury has appeared often in COMMON GROUND with her sketches of New Mexico.

The illustration is by Bernadine Custer.

• The Common Council at Work •

STUDY OF EUROPEAN BELIEFS REGARDING THE UNITED STATES

WHAT beliefs in Europe most seriously hamper true understanding of the United States, its institutions and policies? Answers to this important question will be found in a 140-page report which the Common Council is publishing this June. It summarizes the results of a study which the Council has been conducting the past six months under the direction of Henry Lee Munson.

The study was undertaken to obtain information which would be useful to the Council and others in correcting misconceptions about the United States, in counteracting propaganda against our country, and in spreading the democratic idea. The Council's interest was not only the concern felt by all Americans to see

democracy prevail, but its conviction—as a result of 30 years' work with American nationality groups—that the unparalleled human resources which immigration has brought our country could be much more effectively utilized in the struggle against totalitarianism. The 35,000,000 Americans who were born abroad or are the children of foreign-born parents are potentially, the Council believes, among the most influential ambassadors the United States has today. It has encouraged them to send information about American democracy to their relatives and friends abroad. The letters-to-Italy campaign in the spring of 1948 demonstrated the potentialities and some of the dangers of such an effort. Genuine per-

sonal letters with accurate and sympathetic information about the United States are welcomed. Millions of them can be a powerful force. On the other hand, the democratic peoples of Europe are as quick as Americans to resent outside interference and dictation.

The study the Council has just completed attempted to find out what are the chief unfavorable beliefs regarding us and in what directions American effort needs to be exerted. It was based in the main on a 45-question questionnaire, answered by 1,702 qualified observers, who represented the major categories of opinion in Europe and were in a position to know the climate of opinion in their respective countries. Letters from Europeans, interviews with key observers, comments made in connection with the questionnaire, and already published materials were the other sources relied on. The report presents the information obtained, country by country, and question by question. One of its most illuminating features is the extensive individual comments showing the many and varied factors which enter into the mosaic of European opinion.

The findings of the report, only part of which can be reprinted here, are summarized in a section called

WHAT THE SURVEY FOUND OUT

The free countries of Europe look to the United States for leadership. Virtually all of these nations depend to a great degree upon the United States economically, militarily, and even for a measure of moral leadership.

Nevertheless, Europeans have serious doubts as to America's ability to carry out this leadership. A primary source of this doubt is the belief held by over one-third of the people of Europe that American policy is "too changeable." In addition, observers indicated that this belief

is the most serious deterrent to better understanding of the United States. As these countries must base their plans to a large extent on American policy, a changeable or unstable policy on our part creates serious complications for them and results in a great deal of ill will. A typical comment was: "Our government makes mistakes too, but they affect only ourselves. Your government's mistakes affect the whole world."

A second source of Europe's doubt is the two-fold conception that Americans are "too materialistic," a belief held by half the people, and that "Big Business" dominates American national policy, a belief held by one out of three. These two beliefs, shown to be the second and third most serious deterrents to European understanding of the United States, stem, comments indicated, from the feeling that Americans are interested only in the pursuit of the "almighty dollar" and care little about moral, spiritual, and cultural values.

Big Business was also believed by one out of three Europeans to control the press, radio, and motion pictures for selfish purposes, and almost as many believe Big Business controls labor. Our high tariffs also are believed to be the result of the influence of Big Business.

One of the most significant findings of this survey is the amount of uncertainty reported as to what is at stake in the "East versus West" controversy. Western Europeans almost unanimously believe that Russia (i.e., the Soviet Union) is plotting to dominate Europe; and while a majority of them believe that the issue is communism and dictatorship versus democracy and freedom, yet only half of the people in such historically freedom-loving countries as France, Belgium, and Switzerland agree that this is the issue. The comments received on the questionnaire show convincingly that the terms

COMMON GROUND

"democracy" and "freedom" have been warped by extremes of Left and Right to a point where many people are not sure what these terms really mean. As public opinion in Europe may be the deciding factor in this controversy, a genuine understanding of these concepts and the issues involved would seem of greatest importance.

Europeans are looking for a political and social solution measured in terms of human progress and are little impressed by what many of them believe to be empty slogans. Anti-communism as such does not evoke enthusiasm from most Europeans. While most of them are opposed to communism, many of them are to some extent also opposed to capitalism. This is due in some cases to a grossly exaggerated idea of American capitalism, and in other cases is a reaction to their own form of capitalism, which comments describe as having often been more or less socially unjust. Yet many hope the United States will help them find the solutions they seek; they are doubtful, however, because of their firm belief that Americans are too materialistic and therefore not capable of coping with the deeper issues involved.

THE MARSHALL PLAN

The Marshall Plan seems to be fundamentally appreciated and, all in all, confidence in its sincerity and ultimate success is fairly high. There is a strong feeling, however, that this aid should not be considered charity, but as enlightened self-interest on the part of Americans. It is believed that the economic recovery of Europe is almost as important to the United States as it is to Europe.

On the other hand, approximately one out of five persons was reported to believe that ERP is: a scheme to promote American domination of European industry; a plan to promote reactionary

policies in Europe; a scheme to force American products on Europe, thereby taking jobs away from Europeans; and just another loan that must be repaid. Confidence that the Marshall Plan will be continued is high, but the belief that it is solely a political weapon against Russia is held by almost a third of the people in Western Europe. Many of those holding these beliefs, according to comments received, felt the Marshall Plan would have these results, even though they were not purposes of ERP.

In the case of Great Britain, the Low Countries, and Scandinavia, many comments were received pointing out that for reasons of pride, many people prefer to consider the plan only as a loan which they hope some day to repay.

AMERICAN NATIONAL POLICY

The majority of Western Europeans think American national policy is decided by the will of the majority expressed through free elections. Nevertheless, a substantial number believe American policy is controlled by Big Business. Relatively few believe labor is the dominant factor.

AMERICAN PRESS, RADIO, AND MOTION PICTURES

While more than half the people believe these channels of information are free, more than one-third feel they are controlled by Big Business for selfish purposes and about one out of ten believes government controls these media.

Although none of the 45 questions referred specifically to the quality or effect of American motion pictures in Europe, more comments were made on this subject than on any other. The overwhelming majority indicated that American motion pictures are creating much unfavorable sentiment toward the United States. Many comments referred to Holly-

wood in such terms as "America's worst imaginable ambassador," and as "convincing increasing numbers of Europeans that America consists of gangsters, sadists, pin-up girls, cowboys, and skyscrapers."

AMERICAN LABOR

Almost two-thirds of the people of Western Europe think American labor is free to work for its own interests. Of the remainder, twice as many believe American labor is dominated by Big Business as believe it is controlled by government. European labor leaders believe even more strongly than other groups that American labor is free to work for its own interests.

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

A substantial number of Western Europeans do not understand what American foreign policy really is. Suspicions about many of its aspects are common.

About one out of four persons feels that the United States is imperialistic, although comments indicate much of this feeling to be that we are imperialistic only in the economic sense. A similar proportion feels we are trying to force the American form of capitalism on Europe.

One out of five persons believes American foreign policy opposes social reform and about the same number believes the Marshall Plan promotes reactionary policies.

American policy in the United Nations in general is approved. There was evidence, however, of a considerable loss of faith in the United Nations among many of the people of Europe.

The majority of Western Europeans believe the United States is sincere in asking for international control of atomic energy, but many comments indicated that such control "sounds like selling out to Russia."

Great diversity of opinion was evident

regarding American policy toward Germany. On the average, one-fourth of the people believe the United States is endangering future peace by rebuilding a strong Germany. In France, Poland, and Czechoslovakia a majority hold this belief. In Belgium it is almost as strong. Others believe that a prosperous Europe depends on a prosperous German economy.

Only two-fifths of the people believe American foreign policy is firm enough with Russia. Of the remainder, comments indicate that more feel we are not firm enough than believe we are too firm.

The belief that we are too severe or too lenient with war criminals varies largely along the lines to be expected. With a few exceptions, the countries victimized by Hitler believe we are too lenient, and those who were allied with the Axis or were neutral believe we are too severe.

"EAST VERSUS WEST"

On the questions involved in this controversy, Western European opinion is primarily on the side of the United States. Sizable minorities, however, have doubts or are confused.

The belief that Russia is plotting to dominate Europe is—except for the belief that the United States is a democracy—the most nearly unanimous of all opinions expressed in this survey.

On the question of democracy, virtual unanimity exists that the United States is a democracy. Very few Western Europeans believe Russia is a democracy. Some believe the United States should declare war on Russia, and others fear war might result from American "blundering." More than one-fifth of the people believe the United States is plotting war against Russia. An almost equal number believe Russia and the United States are

COMMON GROUND

equally at fault. These two beliefs are not mutually exclusive.

American propaganda is believed to be more reliable than Russian propaganda. Nevertheless Europeans maintain they don't want "propaganda" from us either. They do want information that is reliable and accurate and they want a great deal more than they are now getting. What Europeans want most of all is more information about the average American, how he lives, his hopes and problems. They want more contact on a person-to-person basis. Some European students now in the United States maintained that they would be a source of good propaganda about the United States when they returned home.

That the United States would use military force to defend Western Europe against military aggression is believed by more than half of Western Europe. Many comments received on this question revealed a deep and quite understandable fear of war and a craving for peace. Most Europeans believe Americans don't know what war is like because we have never experienced the devastation that war has brought, twice in our time, to Europe's soil. Europeans, many observers pointed out, have learned the hard way that appeasing aggressors is a fatal mistake; yet these observers say the moral confusion and fear of war are so great that some Europeans seem almost willing again to adopt a policy of appeasement. On the one hand they demand that the principles of the Western world be upheld, and on the other they hope and pray for some settlement to avoid war at almost any cost. They are convinced war would mean another and even more ruthless occupation and are not sure they could withstand the physical and psychological destruction it would involve.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

A majority were reported to believe the United States government effectively protects the rights and freedoms guaranteed the individual. Substantial minorities, however, believe the United States government is politically corrupt and that it controls all state and local officials and activities. The Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities came in for a good deal of unfavorable comment, as did the Ku Klux Klan.

THE INDIVIDUAL AMERICAN

Half the people of the ERP countries believe most Americans are too materialistic. Two out of five believe we persecute, or at least discriminate against, the Negro, and almost one-third of the people feel Americans are uncultured. More than half, however, believe Americans are as generous as they can afford to be.

In amplifying their statements that Europe thinks Americans are uncultured and too materialistic, most observers referred to our motion pictures and to a lesser extent to "slick" magazines and sensational press reports. Many feel American films are the most important factor in forming opinion in Europe about the United States. This is not surprising in light of the estimate by Mr. Eric Johnston of the Motion Picture Association of America that 110,000,000 Europeans see American movies each week. These films are the principal contact most people in Europe have with American life, and they form their opinions of us primarily through our motion pictures.

Comments in connection with the belief that we are too materialistic included several factors. Many believe Americans have no family ties and that divorce is very frequent and moral standards low. They believe that material

COMMON COUNCIL AT WORK

things such as refrigerators, automobiles, and radios have for Americans become an end in themselves. Others believe that our opinions are formed en masse by radio, movies, and advertising, and that we are a gangster-ridden, superficial people with no spiritual values.

It is no wonder that many Europeans doubt the emergence of the necessary moral and spiritual leadership from people such as they believe us to be. Yet they believe such leadership essential if the forces of democracy are to unite with the necessary moral strength and conviction to prevail in the struggle for freedom.

Obviously some of Europe's unfavorable beliefs regarding the United States are not wholly misconceptions, but reflect either past mistakes, or conditions and conduct which still need correction. To face the facts honestly and objectively and to do what we can to correct existing shortcomings at home is one of our first obligations. In telling the American story abroad it is essential to remember that actions speak louder than words.

But the study also indicates that America has a compelling story to tell, one that is vital to democracy and freedom. It must be told more effectively. We cannot

take it for granted that other peoples will understand us or the issues which today are at stake. Even where majority opinion in Europe is favorable, we cannot afford to neglect the very substantial minority opinions that exist. In light of this study, the Council plans to encourage Americans of foreign birth or parentage to a far wider and more determined effort to correct foreign misconceptions about the United States and to further the democratic idea. How intensive a program the Council can undertake will depend on its success in obtaining the necessary funds.

American nationality groups are, of course, only one of the resources in our national life which need to be mobilized. American business, labor unions, service clubs, civic organizations—all have extensive ties and contacts overseas. American motion pictures, press, magazines, and radio exert a wide influence on the peoples of other lands. To all of these, as well as to the government agencies and officials concerned with this problem, the Council hopes the present report may prove useful. Accurate information about our country, democracy, and the American way of life is not only one of our most important weapons in fighting the cold war, but also a chief instrument in building the international understanding essential to a united world.

CORRECTION

The picture among the nationality groups in the Spring 1949 issue titled Polish was incorrectly captioned. It should have read Norwegian. Herewith our apologies to the Norwegians!

• Round-Up •

CONDUCTED BY CAREY MC WILLIAMS

THE LAST QUARTER has brought in such a wealth of materials it has been difficult to make a selection of items for comment in this Round-Up. Because it deals with an area with whose problems I have some firsthand acquaintance, I was particularly impressed with a recent publication, "Close the Breach," a most attractively designed pamphlet issued by the Arizona Council for Civic Unity. (Although no address is listed, copies can be obtained, I am sure, by writing to Dr. Fred G. Holmes, Phoenix, Arizona.) The pamphlet is largely devoted to the problem of segregation in the Arizona schools. Arizona, geographically of the West, sociologically part southern, is the only western state which requires segregation of Negro children in the schools. (New Mexico allows it; see R. L. Chambers' "The New Mexico Pattern" earlier in these pages.) Although segregation of Negro children is made mandatory in Arizona in the elementary grades, the practice is actually quite varied. Some communities completely ignore the provision; others segregate Negroes; and in some areas Spanish-speaking and Indian children are taught in separate schools. The Spanish-speaking constitute a large element in such communities as Douglas, Nogales, Flagstaff, Safford, and Tucson; yet there is no uniform practice in these places. Under the Arizona law, Negroes may or may not be segregated in the high schools, and here the same diversity of practice prevails. Where segregation is the rule, the Negro schools are, of course, distinctly inferior. The segregated elementary school in Casa Grande, the report notes, has 57 pupils and one teacher; the library consists of 12 books. The Negro high school consists of two

rooms: 15 pupils and 2 teachers. No science is taught except biology. The library consists of two small shelves of books. Yet the cost for this school last year was approximately \$11,300—a cost of \$750 per pupil, three times the amount spent per pupil in Casa Grande's "white" high school. In every way the pamphlet is an excellent document; it should have an important influence in Arizona. The inconsistencies so apparent in Arizona's practice reflect, of course, the struggle between the western and southern elements in its tradition. Those who know Arizona will hardly question that in the long run the western element will prevail.

The United Public Workers of America, cio, have issued a most effective pamphlet, "Jim Crow Discrimination Against U.S. Employees in the Canal Zone" (Publication No. 124, United Public Workers, 2 Lafayette Street, New York 7). For 42 years the government has sanctioned an outrageous Jim Crow system in the Canal Zone as a matter of official policy. The rate of pay for "silver" (colored) workers is uniformly less for the same types or classifications of work than the rate for the "gold" (white) workers. Residential and recreational facilities are completely segregated, as are the schools. "Gold" employees are paid every two weeks; the "silver" employees once a month. When assigned to work away from their official station, "gold" workers receive an allowance of \$2.20 a day for meals; the allowance for "silver" workers is \$1.20 a day. The "gold" employees have a retirement system; the "silver" workers are specifically excluded from this system. And so it goes. There

ROUND-UP

is nothing new about the material in this pamphlet—see George W. Westerman's "Gold vs Silver Workers in the Canal Zone" in the Winter 1948 issue of *COMMON GROUND*—but the pamphlet itself is designed for and should receive mass distribution. Here is one case where discrimination, so far as it involves the federal service, could be eliminated by executive order.

A recent publication of the Indian Service—"How Well Are Indian Children Educated?" by Dr. Shailer Peterson—will be of primary interest to educators; but it does contain some items of a more general interest. The report shows, first of all, that Indian children attending public schools with white children do better than Indian children in the reservation schools. This is not, as might be inferred, because the public schools are necessarily better schools; but rather because the public schools afford Indian children an opportunity to associate with other children. The factors that seem to make for the difference in attainment are skill in the use of the English language, the opportunity to associate with other students, and the will to get a better education as reflected in the degree to which parents stress the importance of education. The report brings out the fact that Indian children whose parents have had some education, and who are eager to have their children acquire an education, show superior learning aptitudes. The report completely scotches the notion, which has long been part of the folklore of the West, that there is any "learning plateau" for Indian children; in fact, the evidence is quite to the contrary. Not only are Indian children interested in and able to acquire an education but they are specifically interested in academic, rather than vocational, studies. By comparison with a similar study made in

1928, the report shows distinct improvement in the education of Indian children. In 1928 only 6 per cent of the students were in the grades appropriate to their ages; but, by 1946, 36 per cent were so placed—six times as many. In 1928, four-fifths of the students were more than one year retarded; by 1946, two-thirds fell into the categories of favorable grade placement. During this twenty-year period, of course, there has been a sizable expansion in facilities. There was only one federal school which offered instruction through the 12th grade in 1924, but by 1934 there were 12 such schools, and by 1944 some 37 schools in this category. Even so, there are 15,000 children on the Navajo reservation for whom no schools, of any character, are available.

The Anti-Defamation League continues to issue excellent documents in its "Freedom Pamphlets" series. (Copies sell for 20¢ a copy and can be obtained from the Anti-Defamation League, 212 5th Avenue, New York 10.) The design of these pamphlets is excellent: the type is clear and readable; the covers are attractive; and the presentation is well-organized. Among recent pamphlets in the series, I was particularly interested in "ABC's of Scapegoating" by Gordon W. Allport. The scapegoat theory of prejudice is now so well-known that I shall not attempt to summarize Allport's exposition. There has always been, however, a noticeable weakness in this theory, namely, that it does not satisfactorily explain how the victim is selected. In this pamphlet, Allport gives several answers to the question: the victim has certain distinguishing salient characteristics, that is, he is easily identified; he has "high visibility." The victim, also, usually lacks the power of retaliation ("A scapegoat is a safe goat") and has been weakened

by previous attacks or has suffered some previous ostracism. Finally, the victim must be readily accessible; remote scapegoats are entirely unsatisfactory.

There is, however, another explanation of why the particular scapegoat has been selected, namely, that the victim has been predetermined by the tradition of the group that does the scapegoating, through a process of cultural indoctrination. A variation of this theory has been recently expounded by Dr. Arnold Rose: "Anti-Semitism's Root in City-Hatred: A Clue to the Jew's Position as Scapegoat," *Commentary*, October 1948. Here the argument proceeds as follows: frustration supplies the energy, the motive force, for prejudice; symbolic association directs the prejudice against "suitable" groups. The symbolic association suggested by Dr. Rose is that between urban life and the Jews as an urban people. Rural people, writes Dr. Rose, "hate the characteristics of city life—the impersonality, the sharpness, the weakness, the cosmopolitanness, the pushiness, the cliquishness, the 'capitalism' and the 'communism' which it creates." This hatred is projected onto the Jews who, by long association, have become a symbol of urban life. Obviously there is much truth in the theory of symbolic association, but the theory is not entirely satisfactory. One way to test theories of this sort is to seek out their implications in terms of action programs. Recognizing this test, Dr. Rose is driven to suggest that "the Jews and the city should be dissociated . . . possibly by public emphasis on every effort of the Jews to regain a position on the land." But this is certainly a most debatable solution to the problem of anti-Semitism and one of proven impracticality. The weakness in the argument would seem to relate back to the initial statement that frustration supplies "the energy, the motive force, for prejudice." Is this really

the case? If so, what provides the energy, the motive force, for frustration? And what makes a scapegoat "suitable"? Scapegoats are not selected at random, nor is it visibility alone that determines their selection. The symbolic association of Jews with urban life might explain why urban residents from rural areas tend to project their hatred of city life on the Jews; but it hardly accounts for the fact that these groups often find Jews a suitable—a functional—scapegoat group. This suitability must be related to some aspect of the relation between Jews and non-Jews in the struggle for place, power, and position. Also one might cite examples of groups who have lived in urban areas for several generations but who have nevertheless shown a susceptibility to anti-Semitism. Dr. Rose might say, of course, that these groups look back nostalgically to some memory of rural life or they have accepted the myths about rural life. But some motivation more substantial than "frustration," the causes of which remain unexplained, must be defined in order to account for the energy, the motive force, of prejudice.

The real trouble with the scapegoat theory, as Bohdan Zawadzki has pointed out ("Limitations of the Scapegoat Theory of Prejudice," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, April 1948), is that it is satisfactory as far as it goes but that it does not go far enough. The scapegoat theory provides a plausible explanation of the need for a scapegoat; it does not explain why the particular scapegoat is selected. On this point, it seems to me that what Zawadzki has to say about the theory is extremely pertinent. In seeking an explanation for the selection of a particular scapegoat, he writes, it is necessary to seek "in every concrete situation for the specific, that is, the peculiarities of both the majority and the minority, and their mutual rela-

tionship" (emphasis mine). "Intergroup prejudice," he writes, "both on the part of the majority and on the part of the minority, is the subjective aspect of a group conflict." It is the result, that is, of "the dynamic interrelationships of the two groups, and, therefore, the factors producing it must be sought in the totality of the intergroup situation." In emphasizing the importance of the relationships between the majority and the minority, Zawadzki points up the real weakness of the scapegoat theory which tends to stress prejudice as an aspect of inter-personal rather than inter-group relationships. If enough is known about the specific relationships between the majority and the minority, then it is possible, in most cases, to explain why a particular minority has been singled out for scapegoating purposes. A study of these relationships will also show why one minority is singled out as a scapegoat for certain purposes, another minority for some other purpose. For example, Negroes, who meet all of Allport's requirements for a scapegoat group, do not make a satisfactory scapegoat group in a time of general crisis. The reason is, of course, that they are not placed high enough in the socio-economic scale (a) to incite envy and (b) to make it seem plausible that their activities account for the general crisis. In other words, to know why a particular group has been singled out for scapegoating, one must know the end or purpose to be served.

On the question of the "energy, the motive force," for prejudice, it seems to me that Dr. Robert K. Merton has provided a more satisfactory explanation than that which Dr. Rose has suggested, or, for that matter, than any of the explanations suggested in the various versions of the scapegoat theory. In a paper on "Discrimination and the American Creed"—included in *Discrimination and National*

Welfare, edited by R. M. MacIver (Harper. \$2)—Dr. Merton points out that when we talk about the American dilemma, the discrepancy between our official creed of equality and our actual conduct, the discussion really has three aspects: the official creed; what individuals think about this creed, that is, whether they privately accept it as binding and valid; and lastly, how they act in reference to the creed. In other words, the dilemma involves more than a mere gulf between ideals and practices, for some people who practice discrimination do so precisely because they have never privately accepted the creed. As Dr. Merton points out, "those who practice discrimination are not men of one kind." Having isolated the third facet of the dilemma, he then proceeds to work out a typology of ethnic prejudice and discrimination. There is, first of all, the "All-Weather Liberal" or the unprejudiced non-discriminator. This type believes in and adheres to the American creed. Theoretically, therefore, the all-weather liberals should act as the spearhead of the fight against discrimination. But, as Dr. Merton notes, their effectiveness is minimized by reason of their addiction to three fallacies: the fallacy of group soliloquies, that is, they are fond of talking to themselves; the fallacy of unanimity, which is based on the fact that they do, for the most part, talk to themselves; and the fallacy of "privatized solutions," that is, the belief that there can be a private solution to a social problem. The second type delineated by Dr. Merton is the "Fair-Weather Liberal" or unprejudiced discriminator—the person who believes in the creed but who out of timidity or expedience hesitates to make his conduct square with his beliefs. The third type is the counterpart of the second and is therefore the "Fair-Weather Bigot" or prejudiced non-dis-

criminator. Really a bigot at heart, this type will conform to the creed under pressure. There is, however, a basic difference between the two fair-weather types: the fair-weather liberal feels more at ease when he conforms with the creed than when he disregards it; whereas the fair-weather bigot feels ill at ease when his conduct conforms with the creed. Finally there is the "All-Weather Bigot," or the prejudiced discriminator. This type has simply never accepted the official creed and, therefore, can practice discrimination without any qualms.

The difference between these four types, Dr. Merton is careful to explain, is not based upon ignorance or knowledge of the creed; ignorance is not the major source of discrimination. On the contrary, discrimination is in large part sustained by the system under which rewards are distributed in our society. "When a population is divided into sub-groups," he writes, "some of which are set apart as inferior, even the lowliest member of the ostensibly superior group derives psychic gains from this institutionalized superiority of status." These gains are also more than merely psychic, for the system erects a high tariff wall which restricts the importation of competitors from the out-groups. This system, and the rewards which it offers, clearly supplies the motivation for discrimination, as it also accounts for most of the "frustrations" which give rise to the need for a scapegoat. In practical effect, however, this motivation might be offset or counterbalanced if the belief in the creed was sufficiently strong to make the practice of discrimination seem grossly unfair and inconsistent. In addition to the system of rewards, therefore, discrimination is also sanctioned by cultural norms which appear to legitimize discrimination; to make it square with the creed. From this analysis, Dr. Merton projects much the

same guide for social policy that I tried to formulate in *A Mask for Privilege*: first, mass education aimed at the reduction of sheer ignorance as a sanction for discrimination; second, programs aimed at reducing the social, psychic, and economic gains which presently accrue from discrimination; and, third, long-range efforts to reinforce the legitimacy and binding effect of the American creed as a set of cultural norms applicable to all groups in society (or, to state it another way, to integrate American cultural norms).

Closely related to the limitations of the scapegoat theory is the question of whether prejudice is a unitary phenomenon or whether it can be broken down into specific aspects, categories, and dimensions. Bernard M. Kramer has examined this question in a most interesting article: "Dimensions of Prejudice," *Journal of Psychology*, 1949, Vol. 27, pp. 389-451. Most of the early research, as he points out, was based on the assumption that prejudice was a unitary phenomenon and that it could, therefore, be accurately measured in terms of positive (favorable) and negative (unfavorable) orientations or in terms of a simple two-dimensional like-dislike scale. A number of studies have shown, however, that scales of this sort conceal perhaps as much as they reveal about the nature of prejudice. For example, in a study of anti-Semitism among a sample of Syracuse club members a three-dimensional scale was used with interesting results. In this study, individuals were tested in reference to a hostility scale (aimed at measuring exclusive and discriminatory tendencies); an anti-locution scale (measuring the extent to which people "talk against" Jews); and, finally, an aversion scale (measuring the tendency or desire to withdraw from contact with Jews). Although these three types of anti-Semitism were found to be significantly related, the

study also showed that the motivation for each type was somewhat different. Here, again, the purpose or function of prejudice accounted for variations in the manner and the intensity of its expression.

Kramer suggests that studies of prejudice might well seek to distinguish between its cognitive orientation (the "picture" or image of the minority; what the majority *thinks* about the minority); the emotional orientation or what the majority *feels* about the minority—how it reacts to the stimulus of the minority; and the action orientation, that is, how the majority acts in certain ways in reference to the minority. Studies using some such scale as this might then be correlated with studies of the actual, specific relationships between the minority and the majority for the purpose of testing the proposition that prejudice, in its varying aspects, is inherent in these relationships.

A recent pilot study of segregation in the Indianapolis school system, prepared by Dr. Max Wolff (copies obtainable from the Indianapolis Community Relations Council, 803 K of P Building, Indianapolis 4), throws some interesting sidelights on the problem of segregated schools. Indianapolis has an exceptionally high percentage of Negroes by comparison with other middle western cities: 75,000 Negroes in a 1946 population of 420,000. Although segregation started in the elementary schools approximately 68 years ago, it was not generally practiced until the upsurge of the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1920s; in fact the high schools were non-segregated until 1927. The relatively late adoption of segregation as a school policy probably accounts for the amazingly inconsistent manner in which the policy has been applied. For example, segregation is not practiced in the kindergartens. Of 81 elementary schools, 14 are all-Negro; 13 are non-segregated;

and 55 are all-white. Of 24 parochial schools, 2 are all-Negro, 4 are mixed, and 18 are all-white. The high schools are segregated. A member of the school board, discussing this crazy-quilt pattern, readily admitted that it would be difficult "to explain the logic of why some schools have always been non-segregated and why some schools have changed their character." Actually it would seem that the question of whether a particular school was operated as segregated or non-segregated has largely depended upon the economic character of the neighborhood. Where Negroes have moved into a "white" area in large numbers, the practice has been to convert the school into an all-Negro school, with the consequence that the white students have been forced to travel to more distant schools. Generally the existence of segregated schools has worked a real hardship on both groups, as large numbers of students have been forced to travel out of the districts in which they reside. Many Negro children live in predominantly white neighborhoods but attend Negro schools outside the district. The white children naturally wonder why the Negro youngsters do not attend their school or play on their school ground or participate in their social life. In more than one instance, segregated schools are found in areas of mixed occupancy in which Negroes and whites have lived as neighbors, side by side, for many years without noticeable friction. Dr. Wolff discovered that the school authorities and members of the Board of School Commissioners all rationalized this situation by saying that the public wanted segregation; yet most of the people with whom he discussed the matter spoke in favor of abolishing segregated schools. A crazier situation it would be difficult to imagine.

Some items for brief mention: The is-

COMMON GROUND

sue of Social Action for January 15, 1949 (15¢ a copy, 289 4th Avenue, New York 10), contains an interesting discussion of "Legislating Against Discrimination" by Will Maslow and Joseph B. Robinson. In the Columbia Law Review for February 1949, Morroe Berger has provided an excellent discussion of "The Supreme Court and Group Discrimination Since 1937." I would also like to call attention to an article by Morris U. Schappes, "Anti-Semitism and Reaction, 1795-1800," which appeared in the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society for December 1948. Mr. Schappes shows that anti-Semitism, to a minor extent, was used by the Federalists in their battle with the Jeffersonians. Phases of this struggle have a curiously contemporary flavor. In deploring the manner in

which the Federalists depicted the French as monsters, cannibals, and fiends, one Gershom Mendes Seixas observed, in a sermon preached in New York on May 9, 1798, that "when the spirit of discord is extant, the imagination of man is filled with terrific ideas, and the apprehensions of evil arise from the most trifling causes"—words that might well be applied to the present world scene. I would also like to call the attention of COMMON GROUND readers to a book published in 1947 which has not received anything like the attention that it merits: *Richer by Asia* by Edmond Taylor. In some respects, this is one of the most significant books of the postwar period. I would particularly commend Mr. Taylor's brilliant analysis of the nature and origin of group delusions.

• The Pursuit of Liberty •

CONDUCTED BY MILTON R. KONVITZ

ON APRIL 5, 1949, GOVERNOR DRISCOLL of New Jersey signed the Freeman Civil Rights Act, which is deserving of notice throughout the country. The act amends the statute which outlawed discrimination in employment and strengthens the statutes protecting persons in their civil rights. The act strikes out along a novel line by combining the enforcement machinery for both fair employment practice and civil rights. It provides that all persons shall have the opportunity to obtain employment and to obtain all the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of any place of public accommodation, without discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, or ancestry. It states that this opportunity is to be recognized as

a civil right. The definition of "a place of public accommodation" is broad; it includes taverns, hotels (both resort and for the accommodation of transient guests), retail shops or stores, restaurants and other eating places, places where ice cream and soda water are sold, garages, public conveyances, public bath houses and boardwalks, public seashore accommodations, auditoriums and public halls, theatres, movie houses, music halls, skating rinks, swimming pools, amusement parks, pool parlors, hospitals, public libraries, and schools, and all educational institutions that are under the supervision of the State Board of Education or Commissioner of Education of the State of New Jersey.

The State Commission on Civil Rights

THE PURSUIT OF LIBERTY

is to consist of seven members, appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, for staggering five-year terms. The commissioners are to serve without compensation. The State Division Against Discrimination is to consist of the Commission on Civil Rights and the State Commissioner of Education. The Division is organized in two sections, one to be concerned with discrimination in employment, the other with other unlawful acts of discrimination.

The act provides that the mayors of the municipalities may appoint local commissions on civil rights to aid in effectuating the purposes of the act. The local commissions are intended to foster, through community effort, goodwill, cooperation, and conciliation among the various groups in the community, and they may be empowered by the local governing body to make recommendations for the development of policies and procedures in general and for programs for formal and informal education that will aid in eliminating all types of discrimination.

A person who is discriminated against in employment or otherwise is to file a complaint with the Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner of Labor or the Attorney General may also file such a complaint. The Commissioner will investigate the complaint, and if he finds that probable cause exists for the allegations of the complaint, he is to endeavor to eliminate the unlawful employment practice or the unlawful discrimination through conference, conciliation, and persuasion. If these methods fail, the Commissioner is required to issue a notice, together with a copy of the complaint, requiring the person against whom the complaint is made to answer the charges at a hearing before the Commissioner. If at the hearing the Commissioner finds that the respondent is guilty, the Com-

missioner is required to serve upon the respondent an order to cease and desist from the unlawful employment practice or unlawful discrimination, and to take such affirmative action as may be indicated, in order to effectuate the purpose of the law. Observance of an order of the Commissioner may be enforced by proceedings in the county court to compel specific performance of the order.

An appeal from the order of the Commissioner may be taken to the county court. Upon appeal, the county court may affirm, reverse, or modify any order of the Commissioner or may make such order as shall appear equitable and just to the court; but no order of the Commissioner shall be set aside upon appeal for any irregularity or informality of the proceedings of the Commissioner unless the irregularity or informality tends to defeat or impair the substantial right or interest of the appellant.

If an appeal is not taken from an order of the Commissioner, a willful violation of his order shall be a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than one year or by a fine of not more than \$500 or both.

The Commission on Civil Rights is to consult with and advise the Commissioner with respect to the work of the Division Against Discrimination; approve or disapprove the appointment of officers, employees, and agents; survey and study the operations of the Division Against Discrimination; and report to the Governor and the Legislature with respect to the work of the Division.

The work of the Commissioner of Education and of the Commission on Civil Rights, comprising the Division Against Discrimination, will be watched carefully throughout the country; for, if these agencies are successful within the terms of the act, the law may become a model for other states.

COMMON GROUND

THE PROBLEM OF DISCRIMINATION in public housing has been put to legal test in a case in the New Jersey courts (*Seawell v. MacWithey*, 63A. 2d 542, 1949). Nine honorably discharged Negro veterans of World War II in need of housing applied for admission to the public housing projects in East Orange. All the families admitted to the project as tenants are white, and the managers have in this respect been following the policy of the municipal authority, the mayor, and the members of the city council of the City of East Orange. The projects are financed by public funds furnished in part by the state and in part by the municipality.

The plaintiffs' application for a preliminary injunction and related relief was granted by the Superior Court of New Jersey. Judge Stein held that by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, Negro citizens are protected from the abridgment of their privileges and immunities by reason of their race insofar as state action is concerned, or action by a municipality, which is an agency of the state. The court pointed out that under the act permitting the projects to be constructed, there is an explicit prohibition against discrimination because of race, color, creed, national origin, or ancestry. This means, said the court, that it is the policy of the State of New Jersey that public housing projects, financed in whole or in part with public funds, shall be equally and commonly available to all citizens without discrimination.

The municipal authorities defended with the claim that the city was going to provide public housing facilities for Negroes on the basis of segregation, and that segregation is not discrimination, since the facilities made available to the Negro applicants are or will be of equal, if not better, character than those fur-

nished to white applicants. The court refused this defense, holding "that the segregation, frankly admitted by the city authorities, is unlawful discrimination and violates not only our general policy of the law but also the provisions of the very statute under which these projects have been erected."

An interesting development in the case was the filing of a brief on behalf of the State Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development and the Deputy Administrator of the Public Housing and Development Authority, claiming that the state has not approved the municipality's policy and acts of segregation, and that the state officers became aware of the situation only through the fact of the bringing of the suit.

The decision is being attacked through an appeal to the appellate division of the Superior Court, filed by the city council of East Orange and the East Orange housing authority.

SEVERAL CASES WHICH LIBERALIZE the qualification requirements for naturalization have been decided by federal courts.

In the *Sperduti* case (81 F. Supp. 833, 1949) the petitioner for naturalization was a native of Italy who came to the United States in 1908. In 1923 he was convicted of murder and sentenced to death. The death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. In 1933 his life sentence was commuted to ten years and one month, and he was released from prison and placed on parole for life. In 1947 the governor of Pennsylvania granted him a full pardon. In 1948 he filed his petition for naturalization. His wife became a citizen in 1945. The couple have five daughters, "who have been and still are," said Judge Watson of the United States District Court, "persons of good moral character, and who stand high in their community."

THE PURSUIT OF LIBERTY

The court found that since his release from prison in 1933, the petitioner has been and is a person of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution, "and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the United States." At the final hearing, five outstanding citizens of the petitioner's community testified to his reputation, his good moral character, and that his Americanism was "far above that of the average citizen." Among the witnesses were the superintendent of public schools and petitioner's employer.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service objected to the admission of the petitioner to citizenship, for the reason that he had not established, during the period immediately preceding the filing of the petition, good moral character. It was contended that a petitioner who has committed murder is precluded from establishing good moral character.

The court, in granting naturalization, held that the fact that the petitioner was convicted of murder almost 28 years before the filing of his petition did not preclude him from establishing good moral character. While there are authorities to the contrary, the court said that it was not impressed with those authorities and did not agree with them.

IN THE DADDONA CASE (170 F. 2d 964, 1948) the United States Circuit Court of Appeals considered the question whether an alien who has been confined in a penal institution during part of the five-year statutory period preceding his filing a petition for naturalization can establish good moral character. The petitioner in this case had been involved in a fight in the course of which he killed a man. He pleaded guilty to the crime of manslaughter and was sentenced to two to five years imprisonment. Judge Swan said that good moral character during the

prescribed period is the only test of moral fitness prescribed by the statute, and, hence, the crime committed several weeks before the commencement of the five-year period was no bar to naturalization. There was proof that the petitioner was an exemplary prisoner during his imprisonment, and the court admitted this as evidence of good moral character.

Both of the above cases indicate a liberalization of view by courts in a consideration of petitions for naturalization.

A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK on the Oregon Alien Land Law was made in the Supreme Court of Oregon, and the decision of the court and the opinion of Chief Justice Rossman may have an influence in the United States Supreme Court and lead to the latter court's holding alien land laws unconstitutional.

In the case of *Namba v. McCourt* the plaintiffs were Kenji Namba and Florence C. Donald, American citizens, and Etsuo Namba, an ineligible alien, who is the father of Kenji Namba. Mrs. Donald is the owner of some agricultural land which she wished to lease to the two Nambas and which they desired to rent. Under the Oregon Alien Land Law, if constitutional, the parties would be subject to imprisonment for two years and a fine up to \$5,000 if they had effected a lease. In addition, the property might have escheated to the State of Oregon. Fearing these consequences, the plaintiffs asked for a declaratory decree, attacking the law as in conflict with the Fourteenth Amendment.

Kenji Namba was born in the United States, and so was a citizen. He served in the United States Army and was honorably discharged after having engaged in combat operations in Italy. His father, though lawfully admitted to the United States, was ineligible for citizenship because he was born in Japan. The

court found that Kenji Namba and both his parents "are law-abiding, respected people."

The court pointed out that while the amendments to the Nationality Act, which were adopted in 1943 and 1946, made Chinese persons, Filipino persons, and persons of races indigenous to India eligible for citizenship, natives of Japan are still ineligible (others who are still ineligible are Arabs, Afghans, Burmese, and Polynesians). The court reviewed five decisions of the United States Supreme Court which seemed to have upheld the constitutionality of state alien land laws, and also the decision in *Oyama v. California*, made by the United States Supreme Court in 1948, in which four members of the court favored a holding that the California Alien Land Law was violative of the Fourteenth Amendment. The court also considered the *Takahashi* case, recently decided by the United States Supreme Court, in which the court held that a California statute that forbade the issuance of commercial fishing licenses to ineligible aliens was repugnant to the equal protection laws.

The court found that while there has been no United States Supreme Court decision holding that a state must permit aliens to acquire land, there is no decision of the United States Supreme Court standing in the way of the Oregon court's holding that a distinction between eligible and ineligible aliens with respect to land-holding is unconstitutional.

A classification by a state in the exercise of its police power must be reasonable if it is to be upheld as constitutional. Chief Justice Rossman said that no suggestion has been made that ineligible aliens are incompetent farmers and that they should be barred from the soil as a conservation measure. It has not been argued, he said, that ineligible aliens

are wasteful of our natural resources, nor has it been argued that the interests of the consumers demand that ineligible aliens should be kept off agricultural lands. The court pointed out that alien land laws are motivated, perhaps, by a desire to prohibit competition to the American farmer that may come from the ineligible alien. If this were offered as an argument in favor of the constitutionality of such laws, the court said it is "obvious that the argument must be rejected."

The court pointed out that the several hundred alien Japanese in Oregon came to that state lawfully under laws enacted by Congress. "They are here lawfully and are entitled to remain. Many of them are parents of United States citizens, and some of them are mothers and fathers of American soldiers who gave a good account of themselves in the recent war. Our country cannot afford to create, by legislation or judicial construction, a ghetto for our ineligible aliens. And yet if we deny to the alien lawfully here the normal means whereby he earns his livelihood, we thereby assign him to a lower standard of living." The court held that it could find no basis upon which the act could be sustained, and so held the act violative of the principles of law which protect "from classifications based upon color, race and creed."

The decision was made by a unanimous court except for one justice who did not participate.

IN APRIL, SENATOR HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., of Massachusetts, protested the refusal of a midtown hotel in Washington, D.C., to accept as guests two Negro high school students from his state who had planned to visit the Capital. In a formal statement the Senator said: "It seems to me that these Americans should not be discriminated against when they

THE PURSUIT OF LIBERTY

come to the Capital of the nation. I hope the day is not far distant when these practices will cease."

At the same time Republican and Southern Democratic members of the House of Representatives defeated a proposal that would have ended racial segregation in the schools of Washington, D.C. By a vote of 106 to 64 a proposal offered as an amendment to the annual District of Columbia appropriation bill, which would have withheld federal funds from any agency practicing discrimination because of race, color, creed, or national origin, was defeated.

There is a bill pending in the House of Representatives (HR 24, introduced January 3, 1949) which, if enacted, would make segregation and all other forms of discrimination on account of race, color, or creed in the District of Columbia illegal. The bill would outlaw segregation and other discriminatory practices in all places of public education, public accommodation, and public amusement, including schools, hotels, restaurants, stores, theatres, hospitals, and similar places. Violation of the act would carry a penalty of not less than \$100 or more than \$500, to be recovered in a civil action by the person aggrieved; and a violation would also be a misdemeanor, entailing a fine of from \$10 to \$100, or imprisonment of from 10 to 100 days, or both a fine and imprisonment.

IN MARCH THE SUPREME COURT agreed to decide whether segregation is discrimination. It will review the contention of a Baltimore Negro that wherever there is segregation, there is inequality or discrimination.

Particularly the case involves the practice of southern railroads in setting aside for Negroes a table or two in a partitioned section of the dining car at the kitchen end. A federal court has ruled that racial segregation in interstate commerce was not forbidden by the Constitution nor by any act of Congress, so long as equal treatment is afforded. The decision was made by two judges sitting specially in the district court, one judge dissenting. The dissenting judge said that "discrimination exists whenever a member of one race is denied service available to a member of another."

A bill pending in the House of Representatives (HR 22, introduced January 3, 1949) would make segregation of passengers in interstate commerce illegal. The bill is intended as an amendment to the Interstate Commerce Act, and provides that it shall be unlawful to segregate passengers on account of race or color.

At the present time, while a state may not by law segregate passengers moving in interstate commerce, the railroads themselves may practice segregation, because the Interstate Commerce Act has been construed as prohibiting discrimination but not segregation (under decisions of the United States Supreme Court, segregation by itself is not discrimination). If the Supreme Court in the *Henderson* case, now pending before it, will decide that segregation in interstate commerce is discrimination, which the Constitution prohibits, the amendment to the Interstate Commerce Act will not be necessary. But interested parties are quite right in attacking the problem both in Congress and in the courts.

• The Bookshelf •

VARIATIONS ON THE AMERICAN THEME

REVIEWS BY HENRY C. TRACY

Since the summer preceding Pearl Harbor, there has been a constant stream of books dealing with America, its character, creed, and significance as a nation, as well as the diversity of its people, places, and cultures. In Autumn 1941 this Bookshelf reviewed three anthologies designed to show by documents and other papers what this country stands for. In subsequent issues there have seldom been less than six books bearing on the theme, exclusive of biographies and regional studies. Some have introduced the newcomer to principles and faiths that are everywhere professed but often belied in conduct; others have been addressed equally or mainly to the native-born American, since failure on his part to live up to the tradition is more flagrant. The volumes have shown increasing concern for the future of every other forward-looking nation if this one, once an acknowledged leader, fails in the qualities leadership demands.

That we may better understand what we are or can be today, many authors have leaned heavily on the reports of foreign visitors to bring us detailed observations, written at the time and by keen observers, on the American past as it was from the Revolution on. But for rarity and interest of the selections (many of them are first translations) and for quality and competence in the authors quoted, we have not had anything like Oscar Handlin's *This Was America* (Harvard University Press. \$6). The earlier selections give us an amazingly vivid picture of folk life in town and country, of farms cut out of the woodlands, of a thriving commerce on the seaboard, of goods produced and shipped

(including ships built and sold in England) and goods received in return. Each selection, forming a complete chapter, often a lengthy one, yields its quota to complete a wonderful mosaic of our years from 1760 to the present decade. Crèvecoeur is not omitted; indeed the 22 pages allotted his "American Farmer" impress us far more than the brief quotations usually encountered. His less known countryman, Brissot, with 20 pages, covers the life of the cities. Other and later comments are by no means as flattering as these two. By including sharp criticisms, Mr. Handlin gives us a complete picture. The reader may be assured of a sustained interest all through. Of the forty selections we can cite here only a few, such as the comments of Grassi (1819), a Jesuit scholar, on social behaviors, for their fairness; of Professor Hauser (1924) for his penetration of economic problems; and of Odette Keun (1937) for the keenest sense of the whole world's stake in American democracy. She writes: "If liberty is injured or extinguished in America, the only thing that makes my life worth living is injured or extinguished too." And she is impressed with a tragic duality: "deathless aspiration for democracy and incessant betrayal of it" here.

Andre Visson, writing *As Others See Us* (Doubleday. \$3), serves in a double role. Foreign-born and bred, only recently an American citizen, he can tell us what Europeans think and feel about us today, and why; and from knowledge gained here—which they lack—he can show them that their suspicions of our motives are groundless and that there are no tensions between us that mutual trust and

better acquaintance cannot heal. His sense of responsibility as an American citizen is very keen. He must prove that America has produced more than a mechanized and standardized civilization; that the American idea and ideals are or can be effective in securing for the world what has been gained of real cultural and intellectual progress, and carrying it forward. At the same time he knows that "the Athenian complex" and pride in their peculiar attainments, their common heritage (which Latin Americans share), bar European diplomats from familiar intercourse with ours, few of whom have either training for or interest in talk of art, letters, and philosophy. Not alone pride, but the belief that intellectual leadership should dominate world affairs, a fear of its displacement by a baser sort, colors this feeling in Western Europe, tempting some even to equate our tendencies under business domination with the totalitarian, as the enemy of true civilization. This is but one of many obscurities cleared in a very wise and timely piece of work.

Well-known for his studies in American character and government, D. W. Brogan in *American Themes* (Harper. \$3.50) interprets for British readers in a series of papers traits and ways familiar to him during years of residence and travel mainly in the American Midwest. There he discovered, especially in rural life, solid virtues that offset the crudities our tourists have advertised so widely and so well. But what must impress us most on this side is Mr. Brogan's grasp of our constitutional history and the competence with which he writes of Supreme Court problems, New Deal policies, financial crises, political figures, language, literature, and invention, among the many themes covered in this urbane and friendly book of comment on things as they are here.

Robert Payne's *Report on America*

(John Day. \$3.50) is that of a traveler, English, impressionable, imaginative, and passionately concerned with the destiny of America. Unless these stimulating chapters are read singly and a week apart they may induce vertigo, so varied are the approaches and so torrential the effect. The riddle of America's destiny he tries to resolve now by the poetic prescience of a Whitman or a Melville, now by the innate force of the American idea, now by a *mystique* of the human spirit, and ever and again by an appeal to the moral force of *liberty* as an actual determiner of the tides of history. His drift may be condensed as an insistent stress on the acceptance by America of social responsibility and the rediscovery of a freedom never fully won, and never either won or held solely by military power and armaments.

Quite aware of the value of foreign comments and studies, Arthur M. Schlesinger says and demonstrates in *Paths to the Present* (Macmillan. \$4) that they leave room for a native-born American's appraisal of things American. Built on a sound historical framework, his is a keen analysis of character traits and ways; how they were formed by the impact of an untamed New World on Old World mentality and codes of virtue. This yields a set of aspects differing from those observed by Europeans. Thus instead of "restlessness" we find "mobility." Neglect of the arts is balanced by the habit of work and explained by the fear of time-wasting impressed on us by early struggles for existence. New valuation of culture and the fine arts is seen as a result of the shift of population to the cities. Along with that, the associative spirit is noted, active in civic, religious, humanitarian, economic, political, and social groupings in a nation of "joiners." While Mr. Schlesinger also points out a danger arising from diffused responsibility—men do

things as members of clubs, etc., that they would be ashamed to do as individuals—he reminds us totalitarian dictators repress or abolish such voluntary groups to assure their own domination. While the scope of this book is very broad, including sections on Government, on War and Peace, and on The City in American Civilization, no single chapter displays its balance and penetration to better advantage than that on “The Role of the Immigrant,” giving in 26 packed pages the causes of successive waves of migration, the mode of their reception here, effects on the countries from which they came, estimates of Europe’s loss and America’s gain, modification of national traits by this influx and, conversely, of traits the newcomers brought with them, and every other focal bearing. In a closing paragraph we find, “The national purpose has been to create a democracy of diverse cultures which should embody the values and ideals, the arts, knowledge and techniques, of men of every European background. This is the New World’s answer to the Old World’s way of segregating humanity in nations with different governments, different languages, different hopes.”

The story of a New World’s answer to an Old World’s traditions is brilliantly told in Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker’s *Father Knickerbocker Rebels* (Scribner. \$4.50). The popular title was hardly necessary to insure wide reading, for the author’s previous work has proved his pages as rich in color as they are accurate in analysis. With Manhattan midway between North and South, already cosmopolitan, Tory interests and affections clashing with those of the common people, New York City from 1765 to 1783 became a focal point in history. This account clears up many obscurities, paints the dilemma of wealthy families that sided with the Crown, highlights others

of equal wealth who risked their all to join the Revolution; cites, too, a movement sparked by the “leather aprons” (mechanics) that made the Committee of Sixty the real government of that town before Independence was declared and held it there until British forces overwhelmed the half-armed, untrained colony. It is inspiring to live over again that fateful period, to see its moods and motives so fully revealed.

Abel Plenn’s *Upon This Continent* (Creative Age. \$3.50) differs from other chronicles of the American past based on reports of eyewitnesses. Here, “native-born” includes aboriginal; “foreign-born” denotes settlers, not visiting travelers. The author’s running comment is informal and with a drive to it, resulting in heightened feeling. Seeking is defined as the driving motive among those who peopled this continent. The Zuni myth of Preceder and Follower is woven into the fabric of a true historic panorama seen through the eyes of folk from many lands who come to join in the great search for better freedom, better opportunities, better lives. The paths they may take are confusing, guides wanting, leaders few, mistakes many. But, as these gleanings from diaries and letters make clear, the gravest threat to a happy issue comes always from those persons or groups who, on a continent that holds enough for all the seekers, insist on taking more than their share, and will hold it at any cost and sacrifice on the part of the people. This dark motive is the shadow that falls across an heroic pageant. Its brighter stretches come from the light of courage and hope that still shines in the hearts of common folk unaware of the great role they have played and are playing. The shape of things to come should be of their molding.

Max Ascoli says of his new work on the world struggle, *The Power of Freedom*

(Farrar, Straus. \$2.75), that it is an optimistic book. Finding there his frank exposure of decay and stultification in our political thinking, some might doubt this. But his optimism rests on a firm faith in the intrinsic power of freedom—in act as well as attitude—to win out against all rivals, especially against ideologies based on control by fear. His knowledge of the workings of statesmanship, true forms and false, historic and recent, makes his argument impressive. The picture he evokes of evil embodied in the fascist scheme of power and personalized in Hitler is memorable. Hitler must not be forgotten, he warns. The lesson of that brief reign of frightfulness has not been learned. It comes to this: Not only the counsels of those who rule states, but the common thinking of men in lands now free or desiring freedom, must be purged of old, trite phrases that have lost all meaning, of shibboleths that can deceive the people whom they exploit. To aid this corrective thinking, the author redefines freedom and the nature of rights. The chapters on these terms, and on the limits of politics, and on political freedom, are worth any man's time.

Ideological Differences and World Order, edited by F. S. C. Northrop (Yale University Press. \$4.50), collects non-controversial studies of world cultures in the form of papers contributed by an impressive list of men who have won distinction in these subjects. They are from the world's universities, and each writes of a culture to which he is indigenous or with which he is expertly acquainted. These studies are designed to show why ideological differences so seriously hamper the work of the United Nations and all other organizations for promoting peace or world government. They assume—or attempt to prove—that these goals cannot be achieved by emphasis on one factor alone, such as political organization, or

an economic system. They show convincingly that these rest on, or are the expression of, underlying psychological and sociological factors (including emotions, beliefs, and habits) which must be changed before the factor in dispute can be altered. Thus, John H. Hazard in his paper on "Soviet Law and Its Assumptions" traces its formative influences to their source, finds classic Greek elements entirely wanting, Renaissance influence late and ineffective, and that of Marx and Engels impregnated with a traditional view of the absolute power of the state over the individual. With that background, the state becomes the guide and authoritarian leader, the law its tool. With this conception Anglo-American thinkers clash, for they (commonly) hold to that of a natural law above the state itself. Other divergencies of view are exhaustively covered. Similarly, Editor Northrop in a paper on "Ideological Man and Natural Man" points out the difference between factual social theories—dealing only with the order of society as it is—and normative social theories, which define what that order ought to be. It is these last, he avers, that make all the trouble and cause deadlocks in the conferences of foreign ministers. Marxist communism is one of them, but so are free-enterprise capitalism and parliamentary socialism. All three are ideologies, and if they are to be proved valid must be tested against social facts. In an extension of this theme (and in a language made formidable by the use of neurological terms) this paper brings evidence that the fabric of which normative social theories are woven can be harmonized when verified against the facts of nature and natural man. Moral man is thus identified with natural man. Other papers support the contention that major cultural factors such as philosophy, art, science, and social relations must be reckoned with as well as politics in

harmonizing ideologies or in promoting peace and fair dealing among nations despite differences. All are objective in tone.

Ideological differences come down to earth in *American Argument*, by Pearl Buck in collaboration with Eslanda Goode Robeson (John Day, \$3), a "talk book," wherein two intelligent women of quite different backgrounds discover more they can agree on than there's need to argue. Both have had wide experience in other lands and with other folk. Both are American by birth and conviction—Mrs. Robeson the more proudly so, for she has no sense of guilt with it, knows that the barriers facing Negroes are set up by un-American people; whereas Pearl Buck cannot escape the shame and disgrace of white American conduct in pretense of superiority. These talks bring out life's

major goals and attitudes as they affect real persons. They concern youth and age, color and sex, marriage and education, world dilemmas, and the quest for freedom. To one listening in, it appears that all our troubles—personal, community, sectional, national, and international—spring from a faulty sense of human relationships, resulting in gross ignorance and neglect of human values. Only on one issue, that of "Ourselves and the Russians" are these two unable to agree; but their difference has to do with means used rather than goals aimed at. Mutual respect and regard are not dimmed by the difference. The sound good sense that pervades these discussions makes them rewarding for all of us who try to be better family folk, friends, neighbors, citizens, and members of the coming world community.

YOUTH IN ACTION

REVIEW BY M. MARGARET ANDERSON

In the Direction of Dreams by Violet Wood (Friendship Press. Cloth, \$1.50; paper, \$1) is a book that ought to be put into the hands of every idealistic and practical young person concerned with bettering race relations. Here are stories of eleven actual volunteer summer projects which have cut across color lines and railroad tracks in rural, urban, and small town communities. Presbyterians, Methodists, the Church of the Brethren, the "Y's," the American Friends Service Committee, the Unitarian Service Committee, and other denominations sponsor these projects, which are markedly interdenominational and interracial, and enlist young people of both sexes and of various economic backgrounds. Of the projects described here, one is concerned with bettering health and recreational

facilities in an upstate New York migrant camp; one takes high school youngsters to the Ozarks, where they poured concrete for a well house and a low-water bridge and pitched hay; another goes with college students to Hartford, Connecticut, where they learned firsthand through jobs in industry the "numbing monotony of mass production" and its resultant social maladjustments; another is in an underprivileged Negro section of Chicago where the group built playgrounds and renovated homes; one even takes an interracial group to Virginia to do a piece of community work. Still other projects were in Kansas, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Indianapolis, Canada, and France.

One is impressed as one reads how much fun the work campers had; how unstuffy was the atmosphere; how much

they accomplished for others, materially and in widening understanding; and how enormously much they themselves learned. This kind of project, multiplied by the hundreds, could change the social

climate of the United States in a decade. Here, for the people who are fed up with mere theorizing, is a real program. Get the book and read it. Put it in the way of others.

THE COMMON BASIS OF HUMANITY

REVIEWS BY ROBERT M. CULLUM

Toward Better Race Relations, by Dothory Sabiston and Margaret Hiller (Woman's Press. \$2.50), is a very important book. It provides a record of the experiences of community ywca's in developing democratic practices within their own walls and in their reach out to the community, and a statement of the principles and methods which have been found effective in improving race relations. This is not a book of generalities, but deals with specific situations which have arisen within this pioneering association. The role of executive and lay leadership, and the means by which central purpose has been translated into social action, are fully treated. At points it deals with the most minute detail, but never at the expense of continuity or the integration of detail into broad pattern. By so doing, it provides an exact account of the results gained from diverse approaches to specific problems, in terms which should be of immediate use to one confronted by a similar situation. Not only those connected directly with the ywca but all who deal with the problems of community organization should find this book most profitable.

In terms of learning to understand the common basis of humanity, the relationship of anthropology to progress is not inconsiderable, a fact which Clyde Kluckhohn amply and interestingly develops in his *Mirror for Man* (Whittlesey House. \$3.75). After providing foundation by a

discussion of culture and the biological basis of man's nature, he brings together in the chapter called "Race: A Modern Myth" the most comprehensive and incisive brief examination of scientific testimony on the subject of race I have seen. It is precisely evidence such as this which makes racism intellectually insupportable and helps, progressively, to make it unfashionable. It is no longer possible for an intelligent and intellectually honest person to be comfortable in racist beliefs, yet my parents' generation used to be quite comfortable. From Boaz on, the findings of both physical and cultural anthropologists have been to a large extent responsible for this change. Herein lies the importance of Clyde Kluckhohn's popular summary.

In *Human Relations in a Changing World* (E. P. Dutton. \$4.50), Alexander H. Leighton considers the use of the social sciences in solving social problems. During the war, Dr. Leighton led a project to study Japanese morale, an undertaking which was obviously more successful in understanding the Japanese than in getting top brass to accept recommendations which postwar analysis showed to be correct. This story is told to prove the accuracy and potential usefulness of social science. From this point, the author enters a strident if somewhat frustrated plea for the use of "disciplined observation and systematic thinking" in the solution of all social problems. His

COMMON GROUND

science is functional, concerned with social facts in being. He deals at length with the problem of getting the results of social science into the stream of policy making, and is not optimistic on this point. This is a provocative book, one very much worth the time of those seeking solutions to problems growing out of race antagonisms. Anyone having the use of material produced by Leighton's rigorous discipline would be better prepared, either to find common ground or to do battle.

Investment in People, The Story of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, by Edwin R. Embree and Julia Waxman (Harper. \$3), fully documents its title. COMMON GROUND readers will find the chapter marked "Race Relations" most immediately rewarding. The life span of the Rosenwald Foundation (1917-1948) covered a period of forward movement in racial attitudes and practices which is both impressive and hopeful, if still woefully far from ultimate goals, and this is a useful and valuable summary of those years.

Discrimination and National Welfare, R. M. MacIver, editor (Harper. \$2), brings together eleven lectures delivered before the Institute for Religious and Social Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The central theme is that there are serious and unrecognized costs created by the continuance of discriminatory behavior on racial and religious grounds. This series of lectures of course deals with facts, but is of greater usefulness in terms of its value judgments, presented with more than a touch of social fire. The topics and contributors: Our Strength and Our Weakness—R. M. MacIver; What Segregated Areas Mean—Ira De A. Reid; The Price Business Pays—Elmo Roper; Effect on Housing—Robert C. Weaver; Educational Costs—Theodore Brameld; Discrimination and

the Trade Unions—Herbert R. Northrup; How the Churches Suffer—John LaFarge, S.J.; Our Standing in the Orient—Roger N. Baldwin; Race Discrimination and the Good Neighbor Policy—Adolf A. Berle, Jr.; Discrimination and the American Creed—Robert K. Merton.

In *These Our People, Minorities in American Culture*, by Richard A. Schermerhorn (D. C. Heath. \$4.50), the author has prepared a readable and comprehensive text on minority relations for college and university use. Ten of the larger groups are covered. Critical checking of familiar material in the chapter on Japanese Americans found admirable arrangement and a sound conceptual structure, with perhaps some imbalance in emphasis on differences between Japanese and American cultural forms, and a few very minor instances where development of fact was somewhat shallow for presentation of a complete account. Excellently chosen illustrations of topical material are presented at the beginning of each chapter, a device which should insure three dimensional retention on the part of students fortunate enough to have use of a text such as this.

The Maryland Germans, by Dieter Cunz (Princeton University Press. \$5), is an important addition to the growing literature of American immigration. Working within the relatively small compass of one state as a case study, Mr. Cunz can by implication touch upon aspects common to the whole story of immigration and Americanization. The period of the German influx was, of course, a long one, and he deals separately with the colonial period, from 1640 to 1790; the "middle ages" of immigration, from 1790 to 1865; and the last generations, from 1865 to 1940, which spanned the two wars with the home

country. He examines the two types of settlement in Maryland—the rural groups in the western counties which were assimilated relatively early; and the urban groups in and around Baltimore, which, for a variety of factors, walled themselves in in a kind of Little Germany. *COMMON GROUND* readers will remember some of the Baltimore material published in its Spring 1947 issue.

One-Way Ticket is Langston Hughes' latest volume of verse (illustrated by Jacob Lawrence. Knopf. \$2.75), dealing with racial themes not included in last year's volume, *Fields of Wonder*. Here is the familiar lyric simplicity, the humor, the tenderness characteristic of Mr. Hughes' work; here, too, are poems of social protest, short and sharp and stinging:

"I do not need my freedom when I'm
dead,
I cannot live on tomorrow's bread."

The Poetry of the Negro: 1746-1949, edited by Arna Bontemps and Langston Hughes (Doubleday. \$5), is an extremely

useful and interesting anthology. While the great bulk of the poems are by Negroes in the United States, the volume ranges beyond this country to reflect the "Negro's experience in the Western world" and therefore includes a section by poets of the Caribbean countries. A third section is made up of poems by non-Negroes. No folk material is included; and it is interesting to observe (though it should occasion no comment) how completely poetry by American Negroes reflects the same traditional literary influences as American poetry in general.

Race and Region, a bibliography compiled by Edgar T. Thompson and Alma Macy Thompson (University of North Carolina Press. \$5), lists and describes about 2,000 book and periodical titles on the subject of race generally and Negro-white relations in America in particular. Titles are classified in various categories: The Negro in the American Economy, Race Conflict, Institutions, The Negro in Literature and in the Arts, etc.

M. M. A.

CURRENT FICTION

REVIEWS BY EDDIE SHIMANO

A rarity in these days of meretricious book-promotion schemes, a book that deservedly merits an award, is Bucklin Moon's *Without Magnolias* (Doubleday. \$3), winner of the George Washington Carver Award for outstanding writing by or about American Negroes. The novel was completed under a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship. Its difference from other novels about Negroes is that Mr. Moon writes about people; this is not a "cause" polemic thinly disguised as a novel by the use of stereotype-caricatures who flit lifelessly through its pages. Here you meet a group of people, each of whom is an individual, and live with them

and feel with them through the tortuous paths they travel in their groping for understanding of their position as Negroes in a small Florida town. Because the story is told without anger, the author's compassion becomes ours, and especially is this so in the case of the president of the college for Negroes, whom some of us would call an Uncle Tom. Whether an Uncle Tom is a despicable character by volition or an unwitting (and sometimes unwilling) victim of Jim Crow is a question which is not easily answered. *Without Magnolias* with its deep feeling with, and understanding of, people shows how difficult it is.

Perhaps the following two books should be read together, for they are both about "passing," a problem which may concern only a few of us directly but should interest many of us. Without doubt, it is a pregnant question for many Negroes, who, through acceptance as "white," could escape the indignities suffered by their fellows of darker hue. In *Alien Land* by Willard Savoy (Dutton. \$3) and *Southbound* by Barbara Anderson (Farrar, Straus. \$3), two different backgrounds are posed—and two diametrically opposed answers reached. The explanation for this may lie in the different racial backgrounds of the authors, but certainly both are honest books—Mr. Savoy writing with subjective anger and Mrs. Anderson with objective sympathy.

Two other books which might also be paired are Robert Mende's *Spit and the Stars* (Rinehart. \$3.50) and David Dortort's *The Post of Honor* (Whittlesey. \$3), for they are both about Brooklyn (and, like most novels about Brooklyn, about the underprivileged). The latter is notable for its gripping description of action—violence on a picket line, attempted arson of a synagogue—but it falters badly in a morass of non sequiturs in the area of abstract ideas and motivation. The former, on the other hand, while lacking in the quality of the writing, totals up better although it is the oft-done story of the growth of a child to manhood.

For a complete change of pace, read *Yokohama, California* by Toshio Mori (Caxton. \$3), a Nisei whose "Lil' Yokohama," included in the book, first appeared in *COMMON GROUND*. First scheduled for publication in 1941, only two or three new stories have been added to the original collection. It seems a pity that publication was postponed, for in 1942 the book would have had a greater

significance and importance in many ways. Today the stories seem dated though they should have been in the book, for the Japanese Americans cannot be thought of without thoughts of the evacuation. It will be worth waiting to read Mr. Mori's novel on that strange experience, for he spent three years in that half-prison, half-free, life, working as project historian.

A novel of the North Carolina mountains is *Little Squire Jim* by Robert K. Marshall (Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$2.75), himself a twelfth-generation native of the mountains bordering Virginia. The story has a basis in reality and is developed with imagination and fancy, so that it has all the elements of a pleasant folk tale.

Another book in which reality and fantasy mix is *The Freebooters* by Robert Wernick (Scribner's. \$3), but this is a bitter story about three soldiers in the war, attached to a unit whose ostensible duties are not its actual one. What happens to one of the three, John Black, a Negro, makes angry reading.

Robert, the American soldier in *The Girl on the Via Flaminia* by Alfred Hayes (Harper. \$2.50), is any American soldier fed up with the cheating, drinking, whoring, gambling life of the "conquistadori" in Italy. He just wants a girl to come home to, and he finds Lisa. But Lisa hates the conquerors, and in this compassionate story the author seems to say that we can never buy acceptance with chocolate bars. The problem of what we are to use to supplement our largesse of material goods to people of other lands may perhaps be the same in our relations with Americans of minority groups.

The Evening and the Morning by Virginia Sorenson (Harcourt, Brace. \$3) is about a Mormon daughter of Scotch-Irish immigrants and her small rebellion against the strictness of a Mormon com-

munity. *The Spear Penny* by Dorothy Davis Willette (Coward-McCann. \$3), set in Wales and America of the middle 1800s, has the same insufferable heroine of popular "historical" best-sellers. Audie Murphy's *To Hell and Back* (Holt. \$3), while not fiction, reads like a novel, and is memorable for warm-hearted description of the many men of different backgrounds who fought alongside the baby-faced most-decorated GI of the war. Using

the actual records of a murder trial, Frances Gaither's *Double Muscadine* (Macmillan. \$3.50) sheds a great deal of light on the mores and the attitudes of people in a slave society, our South before the Civil War. *For Us the Living* by Haakon Chevalier (Knopf. \$3.50) is a broad novel about the social struggles in California, not excluding any of the minorities, from the time of the depression up to Pearl Harbor.

BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

REVIEWS BY M. MARGARET ANDERSON

In *Son of the Valley* (Morrow. \$2.50. 12-16), John R. Tunis tells the story of the Heiskells, displaced from the Tennessee farm their ancestors had settled in colonial times because it was in an area to be flooded by TVA. True, TVA settled them on another farm; but hostility to the government and the discouraging and back-breaking labor of farming the new eroded acres, no better than those they had left, came near to disintegrating the family. After his father left home under the strain, 16-year-old Johnny had to shoulder the family responsibility. How he was won over gradually to better farming practices by the county farm agent, how conservation measures and co-operation brought back fertility to the land and happiness and the beginning of prosperity to the Heiskells is Mr. Tunis' story. The theme of co-operation runs throughout. When Johnny had his first glimpse of the stupendous TVA dam before they were moved off their farm, he saw lettered on the hillside above the swarming men and machines at work: "Teamwork builds dams." "Co-operation brings results." At the end of the story, when he is looking proudly at his acres, he is thinking, "We did it. . . . We all

did it together. The people did it, not the government; the folks here on this hillside. Hold on now, said Johnny to himself. Isn't the people the same thing as the government in this country?"

Hit and Run, by Duane Decker (M. S. Mill and William Morrow. \$2.50. Older boys), is a fast-moving baseball yarn. Chip Fiske, whose half-pint size counts against him with the fans who like them big and hard-hitting, and Kennie Willard, a Negro, are newcomers to the Big League Blue Sox. Good player though he is, Chip is an individualist who has not learned control under wisecracks and heckling, who has not learned to subordinate his personal "chip" to the good of the team. How Kennie, the first Negro in the League, wields the Blue Sox into a winning unit once he is given his chance to play (under insults and heckling far tougher than Chip had endured) is an eye opener to Chip and his teammates.

The Rocky Summer by Lee Kingman (Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50. 8-12) concerns a family of Finnish Americans in the granite industry of Cape Ann. The family is warmly presented, and the children's scrapes and excitements are

interesting, but it is Polle who stays in my mind, the wonderfully stubborn horse who believes quite literally that America is the land of freedom.

Boot Camp by Henry J. Berkowitz (Jewish Publication Society. \$2. 12-14) is a wholesome juvenile for those interested in how Christians and Jews got along together in U.S. Naval training stations.

Sea Boots, by Robert C. DuSoe (Longmans, Green. \$2.50. 10-15), is the story of young Mexican American Pedro Fernandez, who stows away on the clipper *White Star* for deep-sea tuna fishing off the coast of California. Ambitious and likable, Pedro wins his sea boots and the respect of the veteran fisherman crew.

Sign of the Golden Fish, by Gertrude Robinson (Winston. \$2.50. Teen-agers), the third in the Land of the Free Series, is the story of the Cornishmen of Maine in the 17th century. Its hero is Chris Tobey, who came from the harshness of Cromwell's England to the New World seeking his family here. How he jumped ship, carried on his father's fish-curing business in Casco Bay during his father's absence, how he made friends with the Indians and won their respect—these are dramatic elements of a story which is historically authentic and which makes interesting use of much fresh material in its reconstruction of the beginnings of the fishing industry in New England.

Pilgrim Kate, by Helen Fern Daringer (Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50. 12 and up), is the story of an English family in Scrooby village the year before the Pilgrims started for Holland. Kate is the 15-year-old daughter of the family, whose father and mother are loyal to the Church of England but whose older sister Meg is drawn to the separatists, both through belief and through her love for one of the band, Gervase Neville. Kate and then eventually her mother and father are also led to the separatist belief, and we watch the process

through Kate's fresh courageous young mind. This is valuable human background material on the Pilgrims.

In *The Bells of Bleecker Street* (Viking. \$2.50. 9-12), Valenti Angelo has written and illustrated the happy story of 12-year-old Joey Enrico and his pals the year Joey's father comes back from the war. The neighborhood is an Italian American section of New York City, and the locale and the incidents of family life and church are warmly drawn.

Eleanor Hull's *Tumbleweed Boy* (Friendship Press. \$1.75. 12-15) is one of the few good juveniles dealing with migratory workers. Colly Harper, the teen-age hero of the story, is well drawn. A normal active youngster, willing and able to take responsibility, he is forced to the fringes of society over and over again. His home in one migratory camp after another is always a makeshift affair with no privacy; his education is even less than makeshift; his friendships can have no roots. Always, just when he is making friends for keeps, getting a baseball team organized, etc., the family uproots him once more as it follows the crops. Incidentally, the author does a good job in delineating the Mexican migratory families Colly meets up with in the camps, pushing behind the stereotypes carried by people like Colly's family to reveal the individuals and the warmth of their culture and family life.

A Summer to Remember, written and illustrated by Erna M. Károlyi (Whittlesey. \$2. 8-12), is the happy story of 10-year-old Margitka, who was given the most wonderful present a Hungarian little girl who had lived through the privations of the war could have—a summer in Switzerland, where food and clothes were plentiful. The story is a good one in itself, but it is specially valuable in its incidental revelation of the hardships of youngsters in postwar Europe.

R E A D

The New Leader

"AMERICA'S LEADING JOURNAL OF OPINION"

- For a Liberal Dose of truth to counteract the cancerous growth of Communist and other subversive propaganda
- For Really Penetrating articles of analysis by the men who make the news.

- Among our contributors . . .

Norman Angell, Ellis Arnall, Daniel Bell, Andrew Bie Miller
Leon Blum, William C. Bullitt, James Burnham, John Chamberlain
Wm. H. Chamberlin, Leo Cherne, John L. Childs
Kenneth Crawford, Ely Culbertson, David J. Dallin, Max Danish
Elmer Davis, John Dewey, Max Eastman, Harry D. Gideonse
Leon Henderson, Sidney Hook, Jacob J. Javits, Horace M. Kallen
Arthur Koestler, Hans Kohn, Milton Kowitz, Algernon Lee
Abba P. Lerner, Ferdinand Lundberg, Eugene Lyons
Robert MacIver, Reuben Markham, Herbert Morrison
Lewis Mumford, Boris Nicolavsky, Bertrand Russell
George N. Shuster, Dorothy Thompson, Freda Utley, Jerry Voorhis

- To Keep Ahead of the news and abreast of the trends, **SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEW LEADER TODAY!**

THE NEW LEADER, 7 EAST 15TH STREET, NEW YORK 3, N.Y.

F

R

E

E

- I enclose \$3 for a one-year subscription.
Please send me my FREE COPY of Arthur Koestler's
thrilling psychological novel, DARKNESS AT NOON.
(or)
- I enclose \$1.00 for a three-months trial subscription.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY ZONE STATE

J U S T P U B L I S H E D

European Beliefs Regarding the United States

*A study of what people in Europe think
about Americans, their institutions and policies*

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
HENRY LEE MUNSON

This 140-page book presents European opinion as seen by 1,702 qualified observers on such topics as:

The Cold War	American Motion Pictures and
The Marshall Plan	Magazines
Rebuilding Germany	The Most Serious Deterrents
Democracy	to Better Understanding of
"Big Business" and Labor	the United States as Report-
Individual Americans	ed From Each of 18 Coun-
	tries

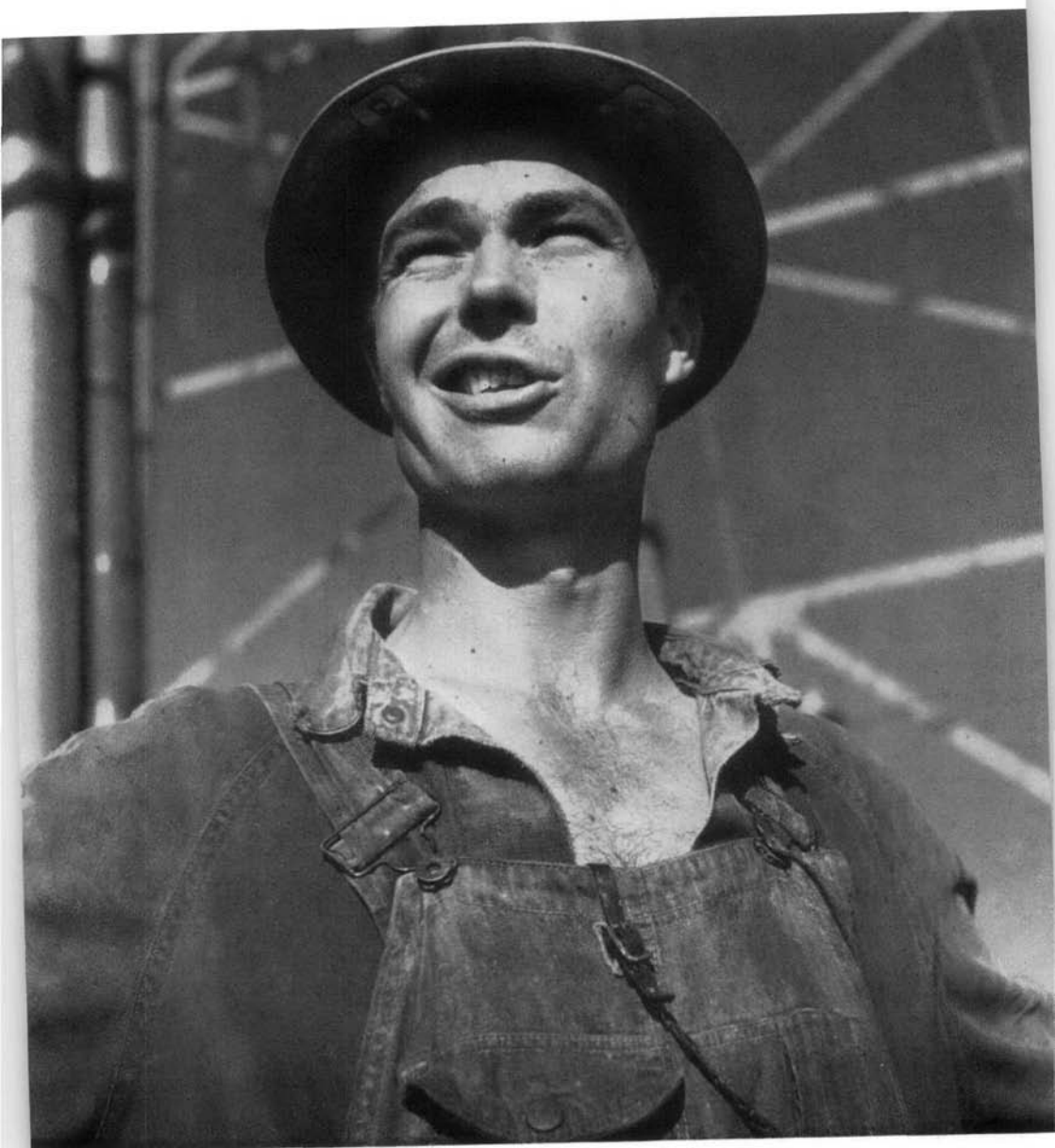
Graphic charts and many illustrative comments help make this report an invaluable guide to European opinion in the present world situation.

PRICE: \$1.00

COMMON COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN UNITY

20 West 40th Street

New York 18, N.Y.



LIBSOHN; STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)

English



LIBSOHN: STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)

Scottish

French

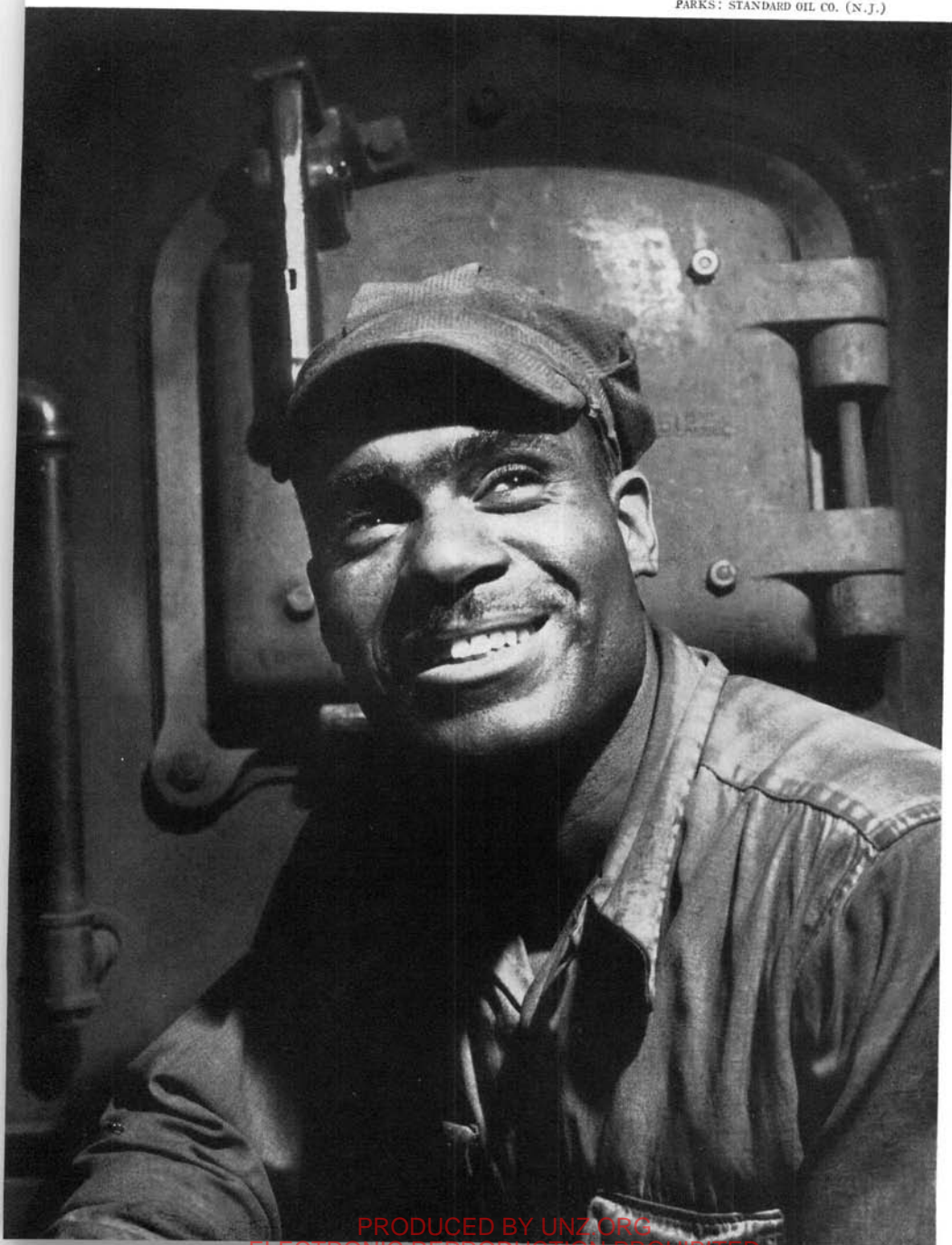
LIBSOHN: STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)



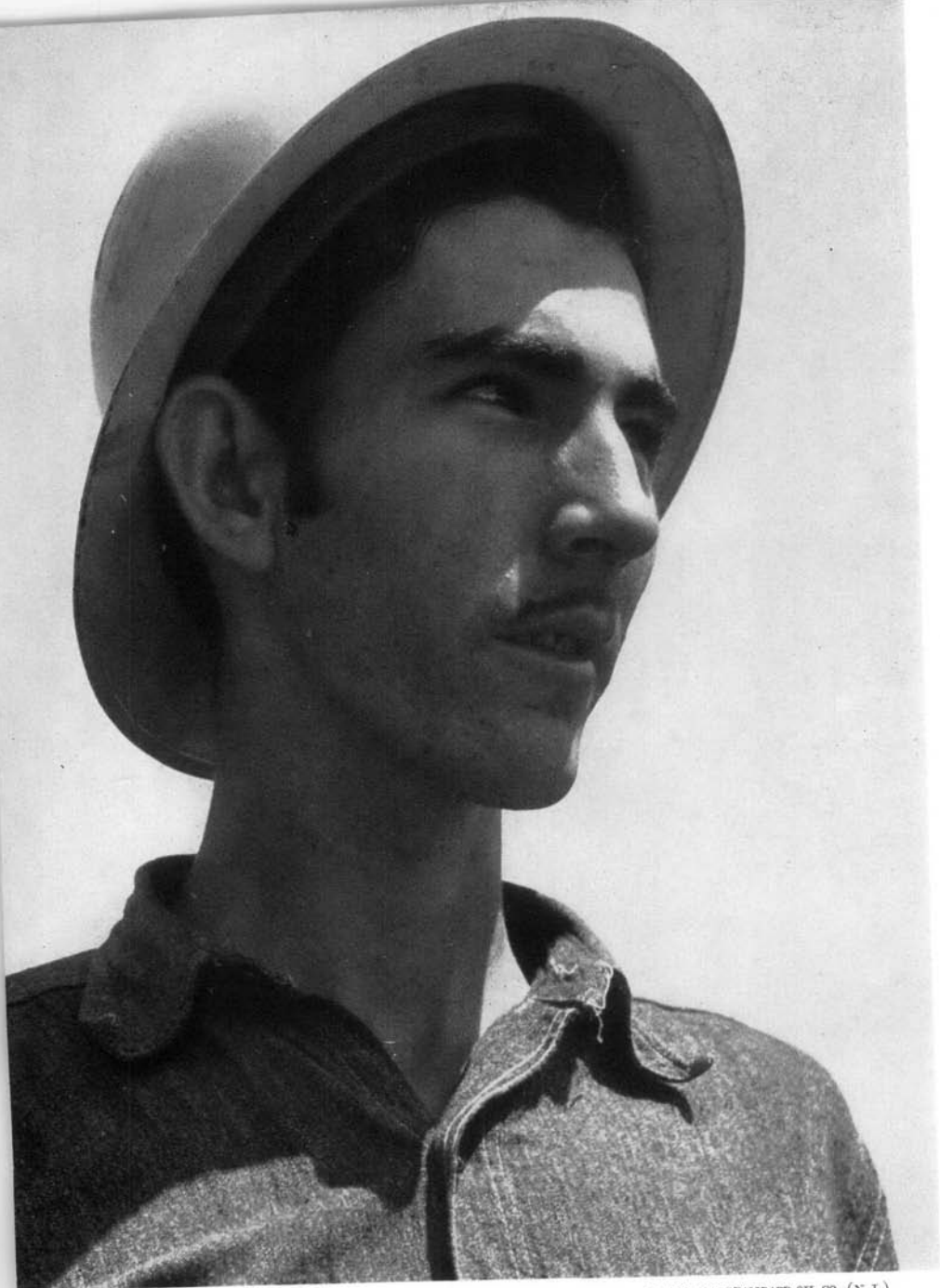
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Negro

PARKS: STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



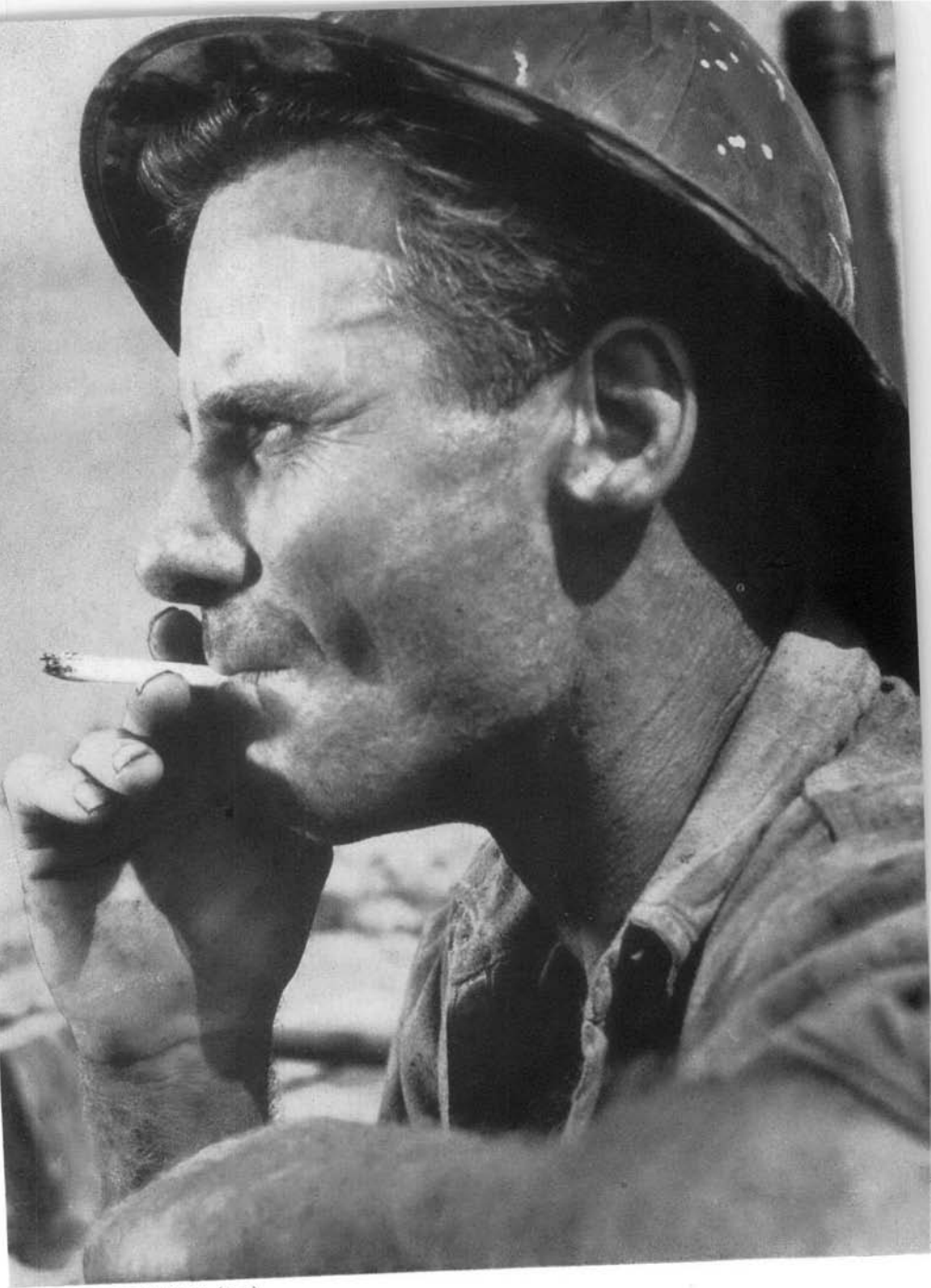
LIBSOHN: STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)

Cajun



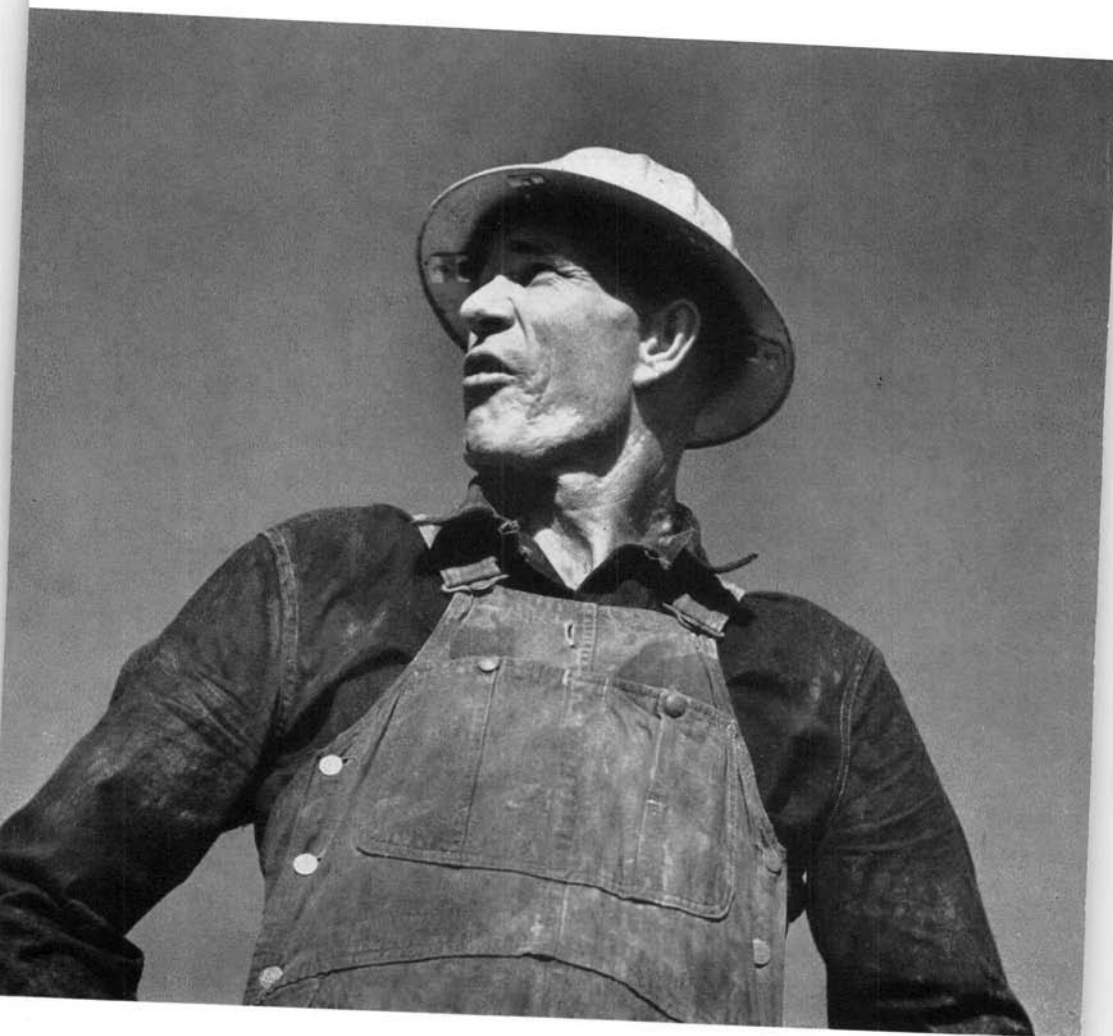
LIBSOHN: STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)

Irish



CORSINI: STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)

English



LIBSOHN : STANDARD OIL CO. (N.J.)

Irish